THE IDLER

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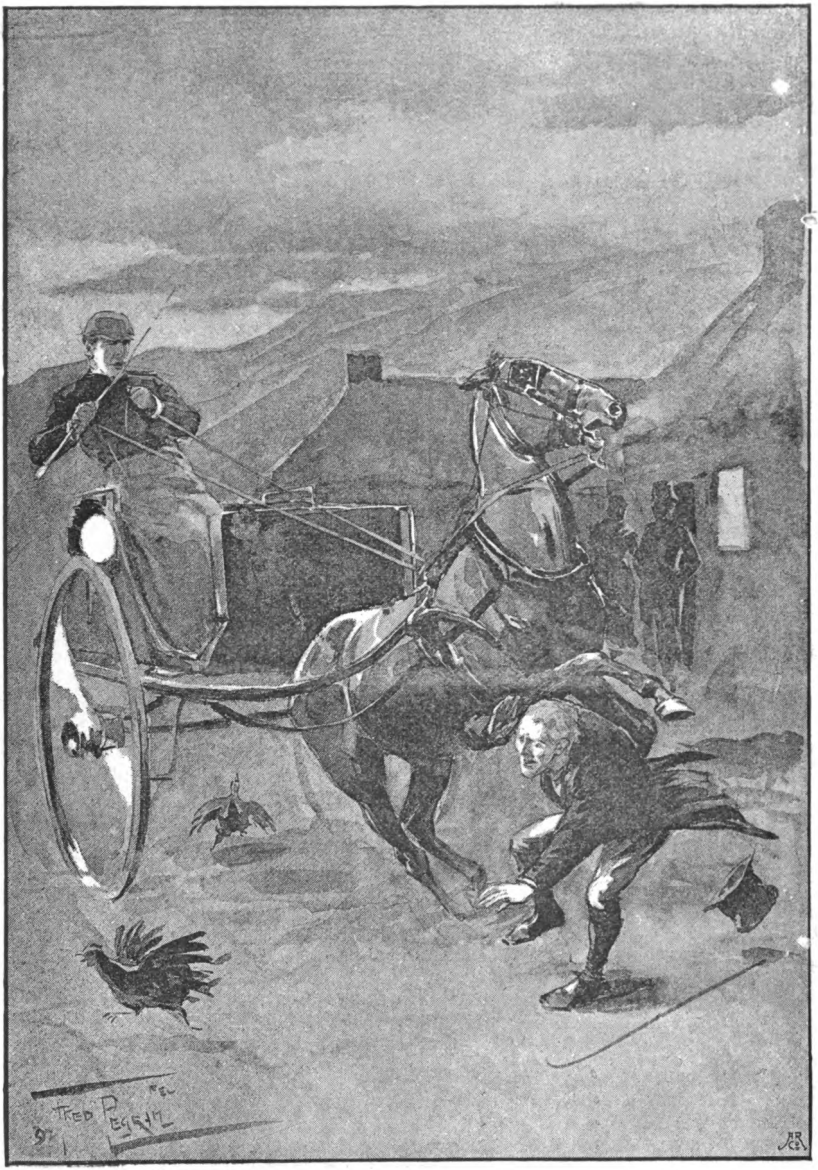

BUT DAN WAS TOO LATE."

THE IDLER

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AN ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY.

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INDEX.

PAGE

AMERICAN CLAIMANT, THE. By MARK TWAIN 86, 203, 329, 444, 566, 707
(*Illustrations* by HAL HURST.)

ADVENTURES OF WALTER SCHNAFFS, THE. By GUY DE MAUPASSANT 252
(*Illustrations* by RICHARD JACK.)

AT THE RISING OF THE MOON. By FRANK MATHEW 310
(*Illustrations* by F. PEGRAM.)

BABY BABOON, THE: AN AFRICAN IDYL. By WALTER PARKE .. 148
(*Illustrations* by ERNEST M. JESSOP.)

BLACK CARNIVAL, A. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS 178
(*Illustrations* by RONALD GRAY.)

BUILDING OF THE BALLET, THE. By ATHOL MAYHEW.. .. 60
(*Illustrations* by LOUIS GUNNIS.)

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS. By JEAN RICHEPIN 532
(*Illustrations* by E. F. ERTZ.)

CHRISTMAS WAITS. By CYNICUS 541

CUPBOARD LOVE. By "DO BAHIN" 410
(*Illustrations* by GEO. HUTCHINSON.)

DOOM OF LONDON, THE. By ROBERT BARR 397
(*Illustrations* by A. S. BOYD.)

FAIRY SONG, A. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS 429
(*Illustrations* by A. L. BOWLEY.)

FIGHTING WITH FOUR FISTS. By ROBERT BARR 115
(*Illustrations* by HAL HURST.)

FLORIDA BLOOD FEUD, A. By FRANCIS GRIBBLE 275
(*Illustrations* by J. GREIG.)

GOOD THING SPOILED, A. By J. F. SULLIVAN 153

GREAT DIVORCE CASE, READING OF THE. By ALBERT CHEVALIER and FRED CAPE 631

HOW OPERATIC ARTISTS ARE MADE. By ELISABETH P. L. MACMORLAND.. 262

IDLERS' CLUB, THE. By W. L. ALDEN, "ANGELINA," ROBERT BARR, MRS. BESANT, G. B. BURGIN, FRANCIS GRIBBLE, JOSEPH HATTON, REV. R. HAWEIS, JEROME K. JEROME, "A LADY," MRS. LYNN LINTON, FLORENCE MARRYAT, FRANK MATHEW, REV. N. H. M., THE REV. DR. PARKER, EDEN PHILLPOTTS, DR. BENJAMIN WARD RICHARDSON, MORLEY ROBERTS, CLEMENT SCOTT, G. R. SIMS, A. P. SINNETT, — TRACY, I. ZANGWILL .. 99, 218, 340, 456, 606, 713

INTERESTS OF SCIENCE, IN THE. By CYNICUS 650

JAPANESE FIGHTING. By G. B. BURGIN 281
(*Illustrations* by GEO. HUTCHINSON.)

"LIONS IN THEIR DENS." No. I.—JOHN BURNS AT BATTERSEA. By RAYMOND BLATHWAYT 669
(*Illustrations* by G. and B. HUTCHINSON.)

LITTLE MISUNDERSTANDING, A. By ALLEN UPWARD 641
(*Illustrations* by G. G. FRASER.)

PAGE

LOS AMIGOS FIASCO, THE. By A. CONAN DOYLE 548
(*Illustrations* by GEO. HUTCHINSON.)

LOVE. By CYNICUS 127

MY FIRST BOOK—

THE WRECK OF THE GROSVENOR. By W. CLARK RUSSELL 10
(*Illustrations* by T. S. BENHAM.)

PHILISTIA. By GRANT ALLEN 154
(*Illustrations* by GEO. HUTCHINSON and MISS FULLER.)

THE SHADOW OF A CRIME. By HALL CAINE 234
(*Illustrations* by GEO. HUTCHINSON, A. S. BOYD, and A. H. FISHER. *Photographs* by A. M. PETTIT.)

THE SOCIAL KALEIDOSCOPE. By G. R. SIMS 384
(*Illustrations* by GEO. HUTCHINSON, MISS F. L. FULLER, and F. SKETCHLEY.)

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES. By RUDYARD KIPLING 477
(*Illustrations* by A. S. BOYD and GEO. HUTCHINSON.)

JUVENILIA. By A. CONAN DOYLE 633
(*Illustrations* by GEO. HUTCHINSON and SYDNEY COWELL.)

MY PARTNERS. By ROSE AYSCOUGH 696
(*Illustrations* by A. S. BOYD.)

NOVEL NOTES. Parts IV., V., VI., VII., VIII., IX. By JEROME K. JEROME 44, 128, 287, 369, 492, 651
(*Illustrations* by J. GÜLICH, HAL HURST, and LOUIS WAIN.)

NONSENSE VERSES. By M. K. H. 530
(*Illustrations* by CYNICUS.)

ONE HORSE YARN, A. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS 21
(*Illustrations* by RONALD GRAY.)

PEOPLE I HAVE NEVER MET (ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, ANDREW LANG, MARK TWAIN, G. R. SIMS, and WALTER BESANT). By SCOTT RANKIN 98, 217, 339, 455, 558

PLEASANT WINTER IDLING PLACES (MADEIRA). By T. H. CHANCE 437
(*Illustrations* by A. H. FISHER.)

PLEASANT IDLING PLACES (ORVIETO). By W. L. ALDEN .. 35

POSITION. By J. F. SULLIVAN 213

PER EXPRESS. By ARCHIE FAIRBAIRN 214
(*Illustrations* by A. H. FISHER.)

PARVENU, THE. By J. F. SULLIVAN 307
(*Illustrations* by the AUTHOR.)

PRODIGAL'S RETURN, THE. By FRANK MATHEW 424
(*Illustrations* by F. PEGRAM.)

PRIMUM TEMPUS. By RUDYARD KIPLING 474

PROVE IT. By BENNETT COLL 510
(*Illustrations* by A. ELLIOT.)

QUEEN'S TRIPLETS, THE. By I. ZANGWILL 583
(*Illustrations* by IRWING MONTAGU.)

QUONG TIN. By ARTHUR SPERRY 617
(*Illustrations* By HAL HURST.)

REVEREND PETER FLANNERY, THE. By FRANK MATHEW .. 170
(*Illustrations* By F. PEGRAM.)

PAGE

REHEARSING THE SAVOY OPERA. By G. B. BURGIN 354
(*Illustrations* By LOUIS GUNNIS.)
SHANE DESMOND. By FRANK MATHEW 2
(*Illustrations* By F. PEGRAM)
SIXTH BENCH, THE. By ROBERT BARR 78
(*Illustrations* by RICHARD JACK.)
SWEET EXPERIENCE, A. By COUNTESS MARTA FREDDI 483
(*Illustrations* by J. GÜLICH.)
STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE, A. By J. F. SULLIVAN 529
SNAKES AND HOSPITALITY. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS .. . 683
(*Illustrations* by RONALD GRAY.)
TO A PRETTY GIRL. By H. DEVEY BROWNE 9
(*Illustrations* by MISS GERTRUDE DEMAIN-HAMMOND)
TOLD BY THE COLONEL. By W. L. ALDEN.
IV.—THOMPSON'S TOMBSTONE 70
(*Illustrations* by ROBERT JACK.)
V.—A UNION MEETING 164
(*Illustrations* by RICHARD JACK.)
VI.—A CLERICAL ROMANCE 320
Illustrations by HAL HURST.)
VII.—A MYSTERY.. 430
(*Illustrations* by RICHARD JACK.)
VIII.—MY BROTHER ELIJAH 559
(*Illustrations* by RICHARD JACK.)
IX.—THE ST. BERNARD MYTH.. 699
(*Illustrations* by RICHARD JACK.)
TWO GLACIER ACCIDENTS. By FRANCIS GRIBBLE 192
(*Illustrations* by the MISSES HAMMOND.)
TWO CLERGYMEN, THE. By M. BABINGTON BAYLEY 542
(*Illustrations* by SCOTT RANKIN.)
THEIR LAST RACE. By FRANK MATHEW 576
(*Illustrations* by F. PEGRAM.)
TYPE-WRITTEN LETTER, THE. By ROBERT BARR 597
(*Illustrations* by MISS HAMMOND.)
UNDER THE MOONBEAMS. By M. BABINGTON BAYLEY 423
(*Illustrations* by ERNEST GRISET.)
UNA AT DESFORD. By BARRY PAIN 518
(*Illustrations* by SYDNEY COWELL.)

THE IDLER.

Shane Desmond.

By Frank Mathew. Illustrations by F. Pegram.

CASTLE Desmond faces seaward, so when the long battlements show over the trees as you drive from Liscannor to Lisdoonvarna you see only the back, and they say in Moher Village, "the front of the Castle is behind it." From the terrace in front you can see the Cliffs of Moher and the wastes of the Atlantic, and to the right the Arran Islands, with the dim Connemara Mountains beyond them.

The Castle is a noble old house, but when I stayed there first—years ago—it was dreary, because Shane Desmond was a pauper. He had a long rent roll and got no rents, for he was hot-headed and at war with his tenants; he used to drive about the country with loaded revolvers, and with a repeating rifle strapped on his dog-cart.

"AILEEN."

We christened him "Shane" at school, when he was a patriot, and used to hold forth on Ireland's wrongs and the heroism of Shane O'Neill. But he ceased to be a patriot when he became a landlord.

While Cornelius Desmond lived Moher was merry; few paid him rent, but that mattered little, as he never paid a debt. When "Ould Corney" died, Moher was managed by a hard agent, a man known as "The Snipe" because no one could ever succeed in shooting him. So when Shane came of age he inherited a legacy of debt from Corney, a legacy of hate from the agent, the old Castle, and an imaginary income.

As Shane is my friend I have a keen eye for his faults, chief of them is a perilous temper, though you could find no man more cheery and kindly. But it is absurd to see how easily some manage him, his sister Aileen can turn him round her little finger.

Between you and me I was in love with Aileen Desmond in those days—or thought I was—so in my eyes she was perfect.

Some people saw nothing wonderful in her, but I would have been sorry for them if they had owned that in Moher. The folk there loved her as much as they hated Shane; you could have known it by the way they brightened when they met her, with "A kind good mornnin' t' ye, Miss Aileen," and by the way they watched her in the chapel on Sundays, you would have thought they were saying their prayers to her—and small blame to them—for in those days she was a saint and an angel and a goddess, and several other incompatible things, and the stones she trod on, and the trees by the wayside, worshipped her as she went by.

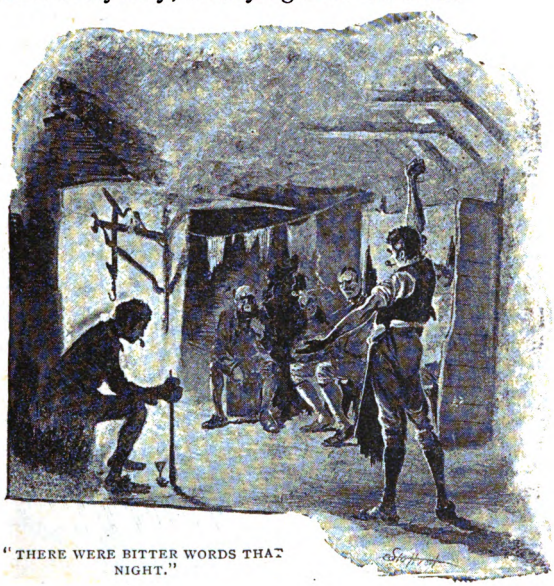
I remember she had a depraved terrier named Mike. I hated to see her fondle him, though of course I pretended to love him.

Shane was fond of Aileen in a patronising brotherly way, but was devoted to a small white American, Virginia K. Geraldine, commonly called Kitty. Kitty Geraldine was staying with the Blakes of Ballynahinch, over beyond Ennistimon, and all the young men of County Clare were at her feet. Why, Ballynahinch swarmed with loud-voiced "Squireens," and ferocious Police Inspectors, and swaggering boys from the barracks at Ennis. Mind you, I am not saying that they were only after her money—for she was very taking—or that she was a flirt, though she made fools of half the manhood of County Clare; perhaps she did it by accident. I am not saying anything that could vex her, for if I did I would have to reckon with Shane. And, as they say in Moher, when Shane is in a rage lions are lambs to him. He was crazy about that girl, and spent half his time dangling after her, and scowling at her other admirers, and when he came home his temper was something to remember. I feel proud when I think how much I stood from him in those days, but then you know I was in love with his sister.

Well, one day, Kitty, for some reason best known to herself, treated him worse than usual, and was most gracious to a languid boy with a sweet smile. Shane never saw him smile without longing to take him and knock his head against a wall. So after spending an hour or so scowling at everyone, except the only one who deserved scowls, he said "Good-bye" sternly and gruffly to Mrs. Blake, a kind old soul who was always like a mother to him, and strode off without even a look for Kitty. She seemed to mind little, and there was a glimmer of a twinkle in her quiet grey eyes. He drove his dog-cart home at a break-neck pace, made the pebbles fly, and his road lay through Moher Village.

The Village, a narrow street of thatched cabins, lies in the

hollow behind the Cliffs of Moher; its people and pigs and poultry seem to spend most of their time in the road blocking the thoroughfare. There was one old man, Dan McCaura by name, who seemed to live in the middle of the road. When Shane came clattering through the village the pigs and poultry fled, but Dan was too late, and was knocked down. He was more frightened than hurt, but from the noise he made as he was carried into his cabin you would have thought he had been near killed. All the people of Moher were in a state of delightful excitement, so were the poultry, only the pigs were indifferent. Later on Shane reached home, raging against everybody, chiefly against old Dan.



"THERE WERE BITTER WORDS THAT NIGHT."

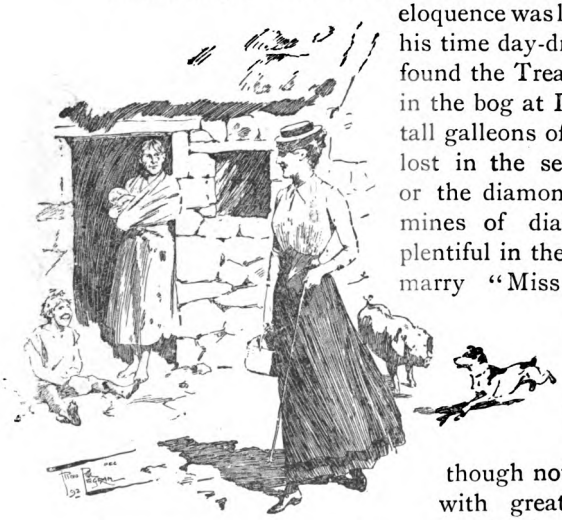
Now the Moher folk were so excited at first that they felt quite friendly to Shane Desmond, but when they calmed down they took another view of him. They felt he was going too far; did he think they were the dust under his feet? Wasn't it enough that he should rack-rent them, evict them, trample on them? Wouldn't he even leave them their lives? There were bitter words that night in the group round the fire in the Shebeen; all Shane's misdeeds were raked up, with threats and graphic curses: "The curse of the crows on 'm!" "May the daisies be his quilt!" "May the grass grow before his door!" "Didn't the boys wait for 'm one night at Leenane, and 'twas he only escaped 'm by goin' home the wrong road—the divil sweep 'm!"

Most were too loud to be dangerous. The loudest was Larry Ronan the blacksmith—a man who never hurt a fly; but there was one black-looking fellow, young Mike McCaura, who sat on a barrel in the shadow watching the angry faces red in the glow of the turf-fire, and felt that it was for him—Dan's grandson—to see to this, and that the threats were reproaches to him. All

he said was—"An' mebbe he won't have the same luck next time."

Mike McCaura had one good point; like the rest of Moher he worshipped Aileen. She was very kind to him, she liked all her "own people," all the old familiar faces of the rough folk in her wild home. But when Mike saw that kind smile of hers—it would have melted a stone—and heard her "Good morning, Michael"—she had a wheedling brogue that would have moved mountains (Irish mountains, anyway)—then he went on brighter and better. In his heart he believed that she had a weakness for him, and as long as he could remember, ever since the time when she was a child, and he a bare-footed ragamuffin proud to hold her pony for her, she had been a queen to him.

In the chapel he never took his eyes off her, Father Flannery's eloquence was lost on him, for he spent his time day-dreaming how when he found the Treasure the monks buried in the bog at Liscannor, or the three tall galleons of the Armada that lie lost in the sea off Spanish Point, or the diamond mine—undiscovered mines of diamonds and gold are plentiful in the Irish hills—he would marry "Miss Aileen." He must have had great belief in the power of wealth, for his looks were against him; he had a dark, hard face, and though not tall was heavily built, with great shoulders and big square hands; a man of few words, though it was said he was eloquent at times. In any case I think he would have hated Shane for being handsome and dashing. If Shane were dead, Aileen would rule over Moher, and there would be fair days for everybody.

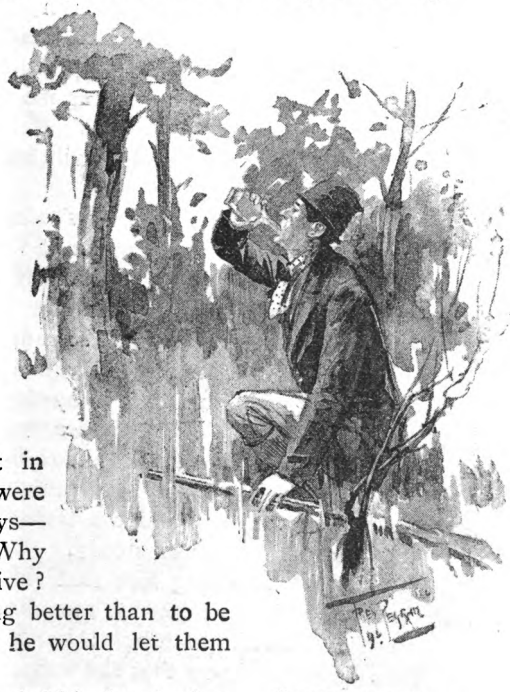


"SHE LIKED ALL HER OWN PEOPLE."

McCaura decided to shoot Desmond as soon as convenient, and was proud of his decision; he was a hero in his own eyes when he started next evening, after dusk, with a light conscience, a heavy gun and a bottle of whiskey. He took up his post in the thick shrubbery on the left-hand side of the avenue, close to the

big gate of the Castle. Shane was at Ennistimon Fair, and when he came back would stop just inside the gate while his old footman locked it.

Mike crouched low in the wet shrubbery, with the gun by him, and plied himself with whiskey. Through the branches he could see dimly the white top of the gate, and on it a white lion, the "lion rampant" of the Desmonds, an absurd beast standing on one leg. The beast was supposed to be defiant, but now his lifted paws seemed giving an exciting warning to the last Desmond of Castle Desmond. The whiskey at first softened Mike, and as he looked at the lion he felt it was a pity to kill one of the old stock, the real gentry, now that half Ireland was owned by upstarts and money-lenders. There was never a Desmond shot before except in battles or duels — they were grand folk in the old days— but 'twas his own fault. Why couldn't he live and let live? Sure they wanted nothing better than to be friends with him, if only he would let them alone.



"A FURTHER DRINK STEELED HIS HEART."

But a further drink steeled his heart, also his temper grew savage, his hiding-place was unpleasant, his knee sank into the mud, at every move the stiff wet laurel leaves and branches worried him. He began to have doubts whether Desmond was coming at all. If you have never waited in a damp shrubbery to shoot a man, you can have no idea how irritating it is if he is not punctual.

By this time it was growing dark, the lion faded, the twilight and the whiskey were disappearing together, and Mike was muddled and desperate. Suddenly he heard light steps on the gravel, someone was coming down the avenue, then a terrier rushed into the shrubbery and barked at him angrily. His first thought was

to strangle the dog, but it kept out of his reach; he was mortally afraid it would knock against the trigger of the gun.

The steps on the gravel stopped, and then his heart stopped too, for he heard Aileen's wheedling voice:

"Are ye in there, Mike? Come out of that now this minute!"

He did not know whether he was standing on his heels or his head. How did she know he was there? It was all up with him! but then she had never called him "Mike" before, she had never spoken to him so lovingly. He could not believe his ears, then heard Aileen again:

"Mike, dear, don't ye hear me calling you? Are ye there, Mike?"

He got up and lurched heavily into the avenue before her.

"I am so, Miss," he said.

There was once a man who rubbed an old ring, and was surprised to find that he had raised the Devil.

So was Aileen astonished when she called her terrier out of the shrubbery, and found she had raised a hulking peasant. At first she indulged in a small scream; then, when she saw it was only Michael McCaura, she laughed with great enjoyment. Now it was worth walking a mile any day to hear Aileen's laugh, but just then Mike had a dazed idea that she was laughing at him, for, unfortunately, when he stood before her, he realised that he was very drunk, could not speak, his legs were walking from under him, the earth and the trees were tottering; only Aileen's trim straight figure was steady.

Aileen was telling him that she had been calling her terrier, that she had come down to meet her brother, and how sorry she was that Dan had been hurt; but her words were meaningless to him. He only knew that she was calling him "Michael" now, and speaking in her usual sweet high and mighty way, though a minute before she had called him "Mike," as if she cared for him. But how could she care for him when he was drunk—blind drunk? He wished that the earth would open and swallow him. Next day he had only a vague idea how he got home, only remembered that, as he shambled away, that terrier sent a hurricane of derisive barks after him; but he found the gun still in the shrubbery; and later he came to be glad that she stopped him.

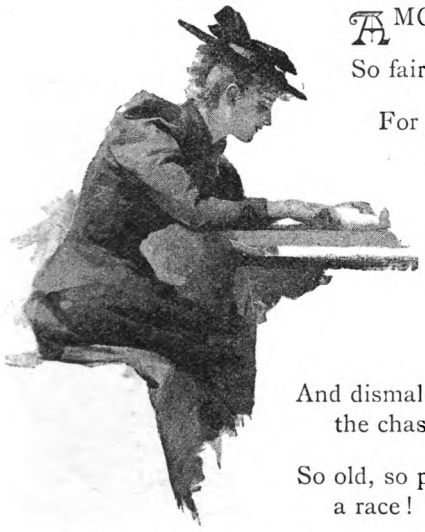
McCaura told me part of this story when I came on him strangely afterwards, a long way from Liscannor. But I knew nothing of it in the old days, when I was in love with Aileen Desmond.

To a Pretty Girl

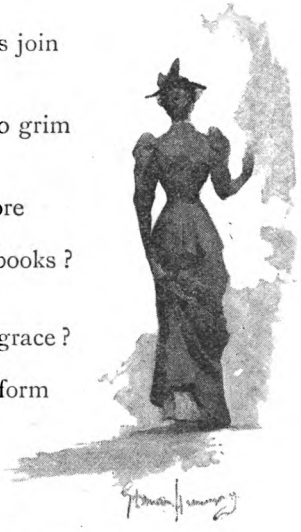
(In the British Museum Reading Room).

By H. Devey Browne.

Illustrated by Miss Gertrude Demain-Hammond.



AMONG the books your pretty face,
So fair and fresh, seems out of place,
For here, "with blinded eyesight pore"
The shabby bookworms evermore,
Hunting for others' thoughts apace;
And dismal virgins join the chase—
So old, so plain, so grim a race!
Oh say, what is it you explore
Among the books?



Some lovelorn poet's tearful grace?
Some shape of gown or form of lace?
I watch you, and my work ignore;
Oh, fair one, think how I deplore
That my last rhyme can't be "embrace"
Among the books!

W. Clark Russell.

"The Wreck of the Grosvenor."

By W. Clark Russell.

Illustrated by T. S. Benham.

CLARK RUSSELL AS A MIDSHIPMAN OF SEVENTEEN.

I AM complimented by an invitation to tell what I can recollect of the writing, publication, and reception of the earliest of my sea books, "The Wreck of the Grosvenor." I approach the subject with diffidence, and ask the reader to forgive me if he thinks or finds me unduly egotistical. "John Holdsworth: Chief Mate," preceded "The Wreck of the Grosvenor." I do not regard that story as a novel of the sea. I was reluctant and timid in dealing with ocean topics when the scheme of that tale came into my head; I contented myself with pulling off my shoes and socks and walking about ankle deep into the ripples. But in the "Grosvenor" I went to sea like a man; I signed articles aboard her as second mate; I had ruffians for colleagues, and the stench of the harness-cask was the animating influence of the narrative. It is the first sea book I ever wrote, in the sense, I mean, that its successors are sea books: what I have to say, therefore, agreeably to the plan of these personal contributions, will refer to it.

And first, I must write a few words about my own experience as a sailor. I went to sea in the year 1858, when I was a child of thirteen years and a few months old. My first ship was a well-known Australian liner, the "Duncan Dunbar," commanded by an old salt, named Neatby, who will always be memorable to me for his habit of wearing the tall chimney-pot hat

"I WAS A CHILD OF THIRTEEN."

of the London streets in all weathers and parallels, whether in the roasting calms of the Equator, or in the snow-darkened hurricanes of the Horn. I went to sea as a "midshipman," as it is termed, though I never could persuade myself that a lad in the Merchant Service, no matter how heavy might be the premium his friends paid for him, has a right to a title of grade or rating that belongs essentially and peculiarly to the Royal Navy. I signed for a shilling a month, and with the rest of us (there were ten) was called "young gentleman"; but we were put to work which an able seaman would have been within his rights in refusing, as being what is called "boys'" duty. I need not be particular. Enough that the discipline was as rough as though we had been lads in the forecastle, with a huge boatswain and brutal boatswain's mates to look after us. We paid ten guineas each as a contribution to some imagination of a stock of eatables for the midshipmen's berth; but my memory carries no more than a few tins of preserved potatoes, a great number of bottles of pickles, and a cask of exceedingly moist sugar. Therefore, we were thrown upon the ship's provisions, and I very soon became intimately acquainted with the quality and nature of the stores served out to forecastle hands.

I made, after the manner of Gulliver, several voyages into remote regions of the world, and in the eight years I was at sea I picked up enough knowledge to qualify me to give the public a few new ideas

"NEATBY."

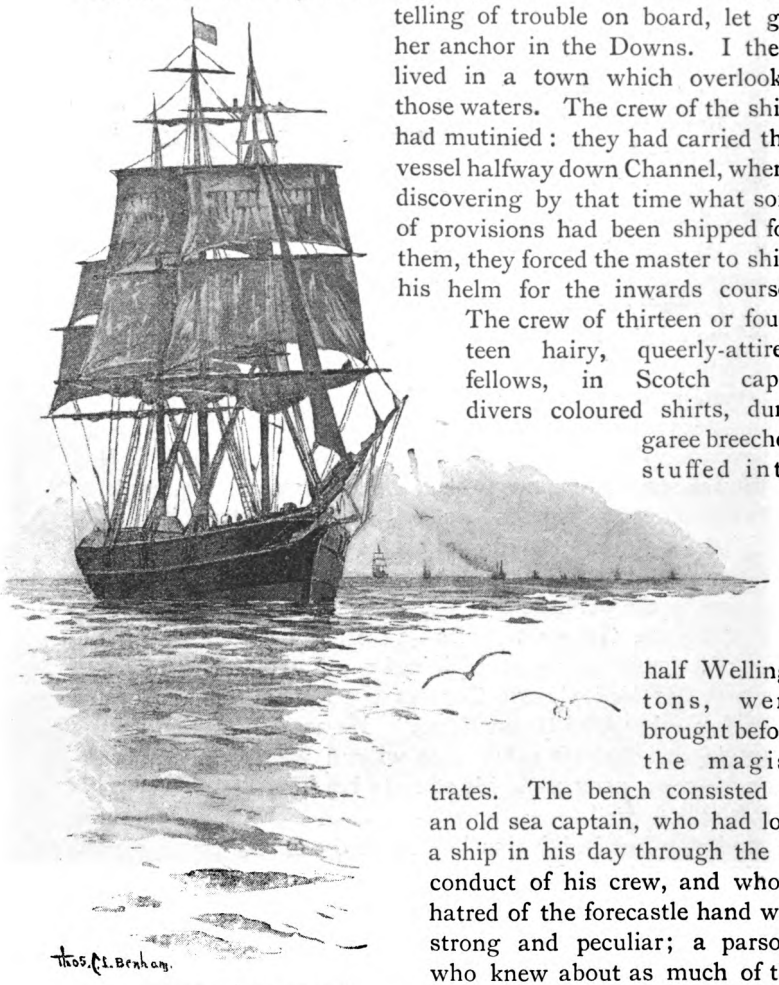
about the ocean life. Yet when the scribbling mania possessed me it was long before I could summon courage to write about the sea and sailors. I asked myself, Who is interested in the Merchant Service? What public shall I find to listen to me? Those who read novels want stories about love and elopements, abductions, and the several violations of the sanctities of domestic life. The great mass of readers—those who support the circulating libraries —are ladies. Will it be possible to interest ladies in forecastle life and in the prosaics of the cabin?

Then, again, I was intimidated by the Writer for Boys. *He* was very much at sea. I never picked up a book of his without lighting upon some hideous act of piracy, some astounding and unparalleled shipwreck, some marvellous island of treasure. This writer, of a clan numerous as Wordsworth's "little lot of stars," warned me off and affrighted me. His paper ship had so long and successfully filled the public eye that I shrank from launching anything real, anything with strakes and treenails, anything with running rigging so leading that a sailor would exactly know what to let go when the order was given. In plain English, I judged that the sea story had been irremediably depressed, and rendered wholly ridiculous by the strenuous periodic and Christmas labours of the Writer for Boys. Had he not sunk even Marryatt and Michael Scott, who, because they wrote about the sea, were compelled in due course by the publishers to address themselves exclusively to boys! The late George Cupples—a man of fine genius—in the course of a letter to me, complained warmly of being made to figure as "Captain" George Cupples upon the title-page of his admirable work, "The Green Hand." He assured me that he was no captain, and that his name thus written was merely a bookseller's dodge to recommend his story to boys.

And, still, I would sometimes think that if I would but take heart and go afloat in imagination, under the old red flag, I should find within the circle of the horizon such materials for a book as might recommend it, at all events on the score of freshness. Only two writers had dealt with the mercantile side of the ocean life—Dana, the author of "Two Years Before the Mast," and Herman Melville, both of them, it is needless to say, Americans. I could not recollect a book, written by an Englishman, relating, as a work of fiction, to shipboard life on the high seas under the flag of the Merchant Service. I excluded the Writer for Boys. I could recall no author who, himself a practical seaman, one who had slept with sailors, eaten with them, gone aloft with them, and

suffered with them, had produced a book, a novel—call it what you will—wholly based on what I may term the inner life of the forecastle and the cabin.

It chanced one day that a big ship, with a mastheaded colour, telling of trouble on board, let go her anchor in the Downs. I then lived in a town which overlooks those waters. The crew of the ship had mutinied: they had carried the vessel halfway down Channel, when, discovering by that time what sort of provisions had been shipped for them, they forced the master to shift his helm for the inwards course. The crew of thirteen or fourteen hairy, queerly-attired fellows, in Scotch caps, divers coloured shirts, dungaree breeches stuffed into half Wellingtons, were brought before the magistrates. The bench consisted of an old sea captain, who had lost a ship in his day through the ill conduct of his crew, and whose hatred of the forecastle hand was strong and peculiar; a parson, who knew about as much of the sea as his wife; a general medical practitioner, and a schoolmaster. I was present, and listened to the men's evidence, and I also heard the captain's story. Samples of the food were produced. A person with whom I had some acquaintance found me an opportunity to examine and taste samples of the forecastle provisions of the ship whose crew had



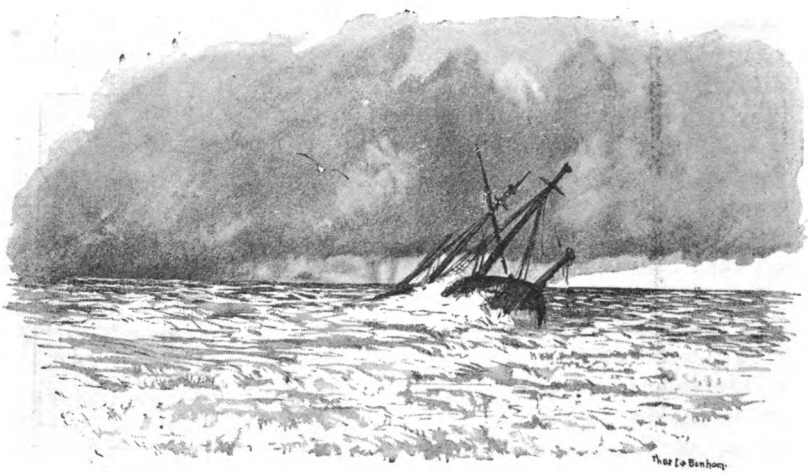
"ANCHORED IN THE DOWNS."

mutinied. Nothing more atrociously nasty could be found amongst the neglected putrid sweepings of a butcher's back premises. Nothing viler in the shape of food ever set a famished mongrel hiccoughing. Nevertheless, this crew of thirteen or fourteen men, for refusing to sail in the vessel unless fresh forecastle stores were shipped, were sent to gaol for terms ranging from three to six weeks.

Some time earlier than this there had been legislation helpful to the seaman through the humane and impassioned struggles of Mr. Samuel Plimsoll. The crazy, rotten old coaster had been knocked into staves. The avaricious owner had been compelled to load with some regard to the safety of sailors, and to the discipline of the Board of Trade.

But I could not help thinking that the shore-going menace of the sailor's life did not lie merely in overloaded ships, and in crazy, porous hulls. Mutinies were incessantly happening in consequence of the loathsome food shipped for sailors' use, and many dreadful disasters attended these outbreaks. When I came away from the magistrates' court, after hearing the men sentenced, I found my mind full of that crew's grievance. I reflected upon what Mr. Plimsoll had done, and how much of the hidden parts of the sea life remained to be exposed to the public eye, to the advantage of the sailor, providing the subject

should be dealt with by one who had himself suffered, and very well understood what he sat down to write about. This put into my head the idea of the tale, which I afterwards called "The Wreck of the Grosvenor." I said to myself, I'll found a story on a mutiny at sea, occasioned entirely by the shipment of bad provisions for the crew. No writer has as yet touched this ugly feature of the life. Dana is silent. Herman Melville merely drops a joke or two as he rolls out of the caboose with a cube of salt horse in his hand. It has never been made a serious canvas of. And yet deeper tragedies lie in the stinking harness-cask than in the started butt. There are wilder and bloodier possibilities in a barrel of rotten pork, and in a cask of worm-riddled ship's bread, than in a whole passage of shifting cargoes, and in a long round voyage of deadweight that sinks to the washstreak.

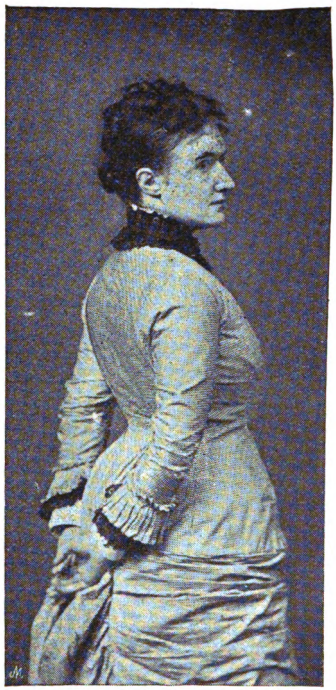


"THE WRECK OF THE GROSVENOR."

But if I was to find a public I must make my book a romance. I must import the machinery of the petticoat. The pannikin of rum I proposed to offer must be palatable enough to tempt the lips of the ladies to sip it. My publisher would want a market, and if Messrs. Mudie and Smith would have none of me I should write in vain; for assuredly I was not going to find a public among sailors. Sailors don't read: a good many of them *can't* read. Those who can have little leisure, and they do not care to fill up their spare hours with yarns of a calling which eighty out of every hundred of them loathe. So I schemed out a nautical romance

and went to work, and in two months and a week I finished the story of "The Wreck of the Grosvenor."

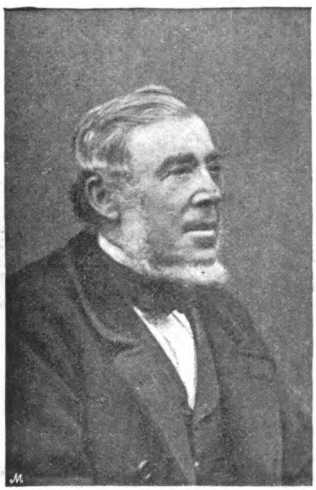
Whilst I was writing it an eminent publisher, a gentleman whose friendship I had been happy in possessing for many years, asked me to let him have a sea story. I think he had been looking into "John Holdsworth: Chief Mate," which some months before this time had been received with much kindness by the reviewers. I sent him the manuscript of "The Wreck of the Grosvenor." One of his readers was a lady, and to this lady my friend the publisher forwarded the manuscript, with a request for a report on its merits. Now to send the manuscript of a sea book to a woman! To submit a narrative abounding in marine terms, thunder-charged with the bully-in-our-alley passions of the forecastle, throbbing with suppressed oaths, clamorous with rolling oceans, the like of which no female would ever dream of leaving her bunk to behold—to submit all this, and how much more, to a lady for an opinion on its merits! Of course, the poor woman barely understood a third of what she looked at, and as, obviously, she couldn't quite collect the meaning of the remainder, she pronounced against the whole. She called it a "catalogue of ship's furniture," and the manuscript came back to me. I never regret this. I do not believe that this sea book would ever have cut a figure in my old and esteemed friend's list. Publishers are well known by the public for the sorts of intellectual wares they severally deal in. If I desired a charming story about flirtation, divorce, inconvenient husbands, the state of the soul when it has flown out of the body, the passions of the female heart whilst it still beats hot in the breast, I should turn to my friend's list, well assured of handsome satisfaction. But I don't think I could read a sea book published by him. I should suspect the marine qualities of a Jack who had run foul of, and got



MRS. CLARK RUSSELL.

smothered up in, a whole wardrobe of female apparel, grinning with a scarcely sunburnt face through the horse-collar of a crinoline, the deep sea roll of his gait hampered and destroyed to the eye by the clinging folds of a flannel petticoat.

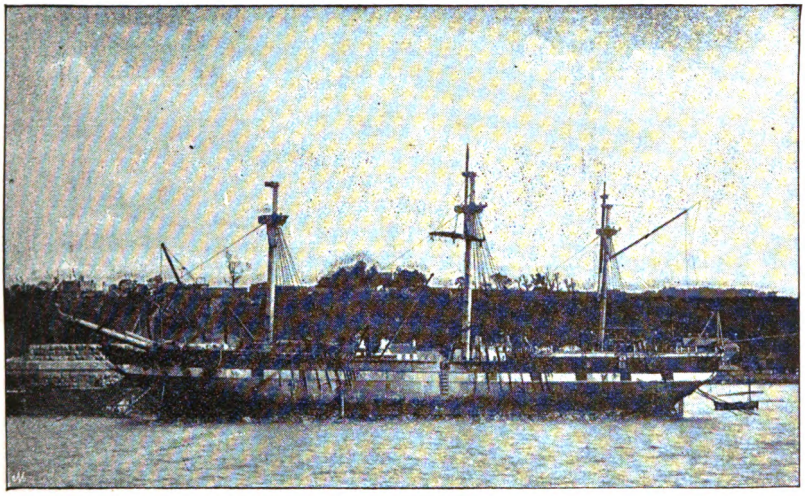
Be this as it may, I sent the manuscript of "The Wreck of the Grosvenor" to my old friend Edward Marston, of the firm of Sampson, Low, and Co. The firm offered me fifty pounds for it: I took the money and signed the agreement, in which I disposed of all rights. Do I murmur over the recollection of this fifty pounds which, with another ten pounds kindly sent to me by Mr. Marston as the whole of, or a part of, a cheque received from Messrs. Harper and Brothers, was all I ever got for this sea book? Certainly not. The transaction was absolutely fair, and what leaning there was was in my favour. The book was an experiment; it was published anonymously; it might have fallen dead. Happily for publisher and author, the book made its way. I believe it was immediately successful in America, and that its reception there somewhat influenced enquiry here. American critics who try to vex me say that my books never would have been read in this country but for what was said of them in the States, and for the publicity provided for them there by the twenty cent editions. How far this is true I don't know; but certainly the Yankees are handsomer and prompter in their recognition of what pleases them than we on our side. What they like they raise a great cry over, and the note of so mighty a concourse I don't doubt fetches an echo out of distances below the horizon.



THE BOATSWAIN OF THE "GROSVENOR."

It is many years now since "The Wreck of the Grosvenor" was written, and I do not very clearly recollect its reception in this country. I believe it speedily went into a second edition. But before we talk of an edition seriously we must first learn the number of copies which make it. Since this was written, my friend, Mr. R. B. Marston, of the firm of Sampson, Low, and Co., has been good enough to look into the sales of "The

Wreck of the Grosvenor," and he informs me that down to 1891 there have been sold 34,950 copies. One of the most cordial welcomes the story received was from *Vanity Fair*. I supposed that the review was written by the ingenious Mr. Thomas Gibson Bowles, until I learnt that the late Mr. James Runciman was the author. The critics on the whole were generous. They thought the book fresh. They judged that it was an original piece of work wrought largely out of the personal experiences of the writer. One gentleman, indeed, said that he had crossed the

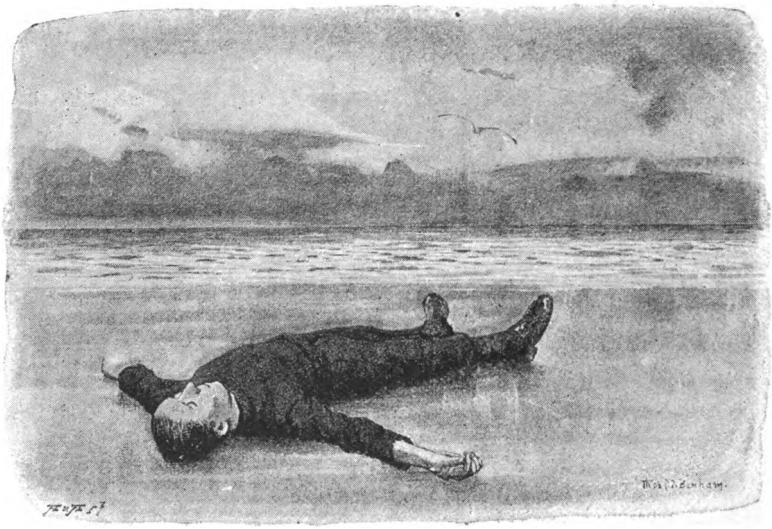


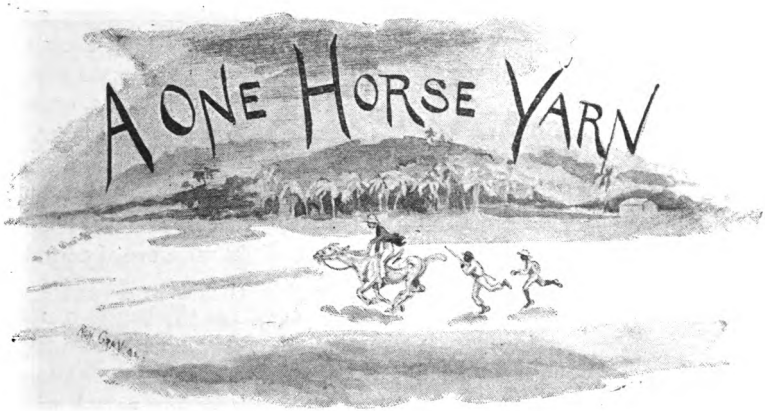
THE "HOUGOUMONT."*

Channel on several occasions between Boulogne and Folkestone, but had never witnessed such seas as I described; and another that he had frequently travelled to Plymouth on the Great Western Railway in company with sailors, but had never met such seamen as the forecastle hands I depicted. The book is considered my best—this, perhaps, because it was my first, and its reputation lies in the memory and impression of its freshness. It is far from being my best. Were it my own property I would re-write it. I had quitted the sea some years when I wrote the story, and here

* In this ship, the "Hougoumont," I served three years. She was a transport, and was in the China war, 1860-1. Her burden was about 1,000 tons. The picture represents her as a sheer hulk employed in the construction of the Forth Bridge. I saw her towing down Channel in this state in 1889—she drew abreast of my house at Deal—and I could have wept to witness my old floating home in so miserable a condition.—C.R.

and there my memory played me false; that is to say, in the direction of certain minute technicalities and in accounts of the internal discipline of the ship. Yet on the whole the blunders are few considering how very complicated a fabric a vessel is, and how ceaselessly one needs to go on living the life of the sea to hold all parts of it clear to the sight of the mind. Professionally, the influence of the book has been small. I have heard that it made one shipowner sorry and rather virtuous, and that for some time his harness-casks went their voyages fairly sweet. He is, however, but a solitary figure, the lonesome Crusoe of my little principality of fancy. As a piece of literature, "The Wreck of the Grosvenor" has been occasionally imitated. Mr. Plimsoll, I understand, has lately been dealing with the subject of sailors' food. I heartily wish success to his efforts.





By Eden Phillpotts.

Illustrations by Ronald Gray.

I DON'T fancy that I have had as many escapes from death as most men—not if what most men tell me about themselves is true. Almost everybody I know has looked death in the face twice or thrice, if not oftener, but, for myself, I must confess that once, and, to my knowledge, once only, has the possibility of a speedy, painful and unexpected exit from life's stage confronted me. Of course, germs and microbes and monetary anxieties and relations have brought me to the grave's edge, so to speak, over and over again, as they have everybody, but I refer now to heroic perils—lightnings and tempests, battles, murders and exaggerated horrors of that sort.

To get these excitements at their best, one must go abroad. There you can make sure of them, and, such is the certainty, that a man has only to choose the particular tribulation he suspects he would shine in, consult geographical and historical works, mark down the place where the jeopardy which he fancies is likely to occur, and then set sail for it. To give an instance; if you imagine you would show up well in an earthquake, do as I did, and start for the West Indies. Skirmish about among the islands, keep a sharp outlook, and, with fair luck, you should catch your seismic convulsion inside three months.

Personally, I did not go out for an earthquake any more than I particularly courted hurricanes or other outrageous phenomena. No, I went for health and rest. I sought instruction and amusement, and sallied forth to find them, armed with little else than a

Panama hat, and a trust in Providence. But it is worth noting that before reaching Barbados I had lost both. One blew away into the ocean off the Azores, the other deserted me upon hearing about the way that Providence treats seafaring men. Their stories rather shook my faith in her, and then came the adventure I am to relate, after which I went about for days saying openly that I wouldn't trust Providence a yard. It is only quite lately that some slight measure of confidence in her has returned to me.

"BLEW AWAY INTO THE OCEAN."

The affair happened at Tobago, a mountainous, volcanic, silver-stranded, palm-fringed little island, not far from Trinidad. Columbus discovered it in 1498, and for my part I wish he had left the place alone. I should very likely have missed it myself, and it would have been better had I done so. Certain Carib Indians were the aboriginal inhabitants of Tobago, and no doubt they wished that Columbus had missed it too. The history of the island is rather eventful. In 1580 England was good enough to regard it as her property, but early attempts to colonise bore no particular fruit. Some fifty years later, sundry Dutch merchants sent out a little band of three hundred Zealanders. With every bad taste, these people began operations by re-christening the island. This was naturally more than the warlike Caribs would put up with, and the new-comers had just time to call the place New Walcheren, and have a look round, when they were suppressed with stone axes and tomahawks. After many vicissitudes involving England, Holland, and France, the histories of which are written in ruins, dismantled fortresses and rusty cannon, Tobago was finally ceded to the English in 1814; and I landed on the 20th February, 1892.

The ancient cotton and indigo plantations have vanished with slavery. Now sugar-cane grows here; but that, in its turn, must soon give way to more profitable culture if the island is to keep its head up. Already some energetic people in the place are making experiments with a sort of agave, or aloe, from the leaves of which a superior hemp-like texture is obtainable. The official heads of the island showed me at least a dozen of these agaves growing in a row on the side of a hill; they said it was a company, and that I might have ten of the shares because I was white and took such an interest in everything. They were disappointed and

hurt when I criticised the agaves rather unfavourably. They declared that a fortune lurked in the things, and that I was simply pitching away ten thousand pounds; but they could not influence me. I had, and still have, a rooted conviction that those twelve agaves will do Tobago more harm than good before they are finished with.

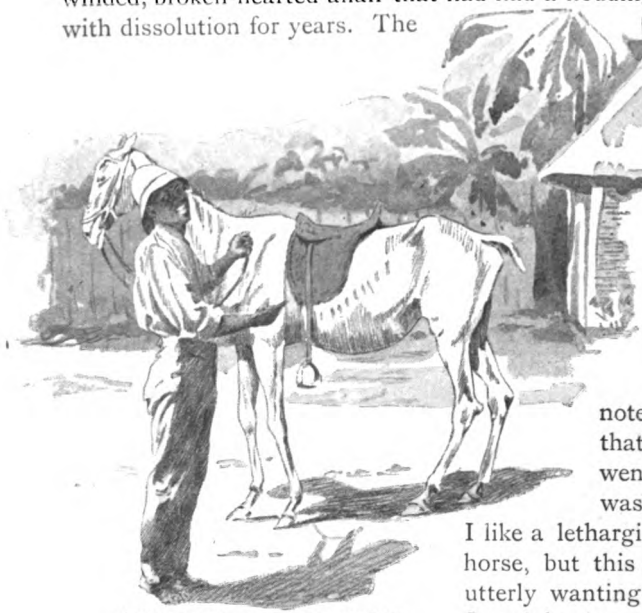
There is no doubt that when a place has neither capital nor labour it languishes. This is the present position of Tobago, and how to assist her is not easy to ascertain. The white folks have not got any money to speak of, and the black ones would not work for it if they had. While plantains thrive and sugar-cane flourishes, Quashie is contented. Two days' work a week will provide him with every necessity, and, if he likes to toil for three days out of the seven, his position becomes one of simple affluence. On three days' work he can keep up a complete pair of trousers and a coat; he can marry, and, in fact, taste all the sweets of civilisation. Here and there, however, one sees a little ambition to come at wealth. Thus the man directly responsible for this narrative had a great belief in money. He let out weird, ungeometrical, bony things he called horses. If you promised to pay him four shillings, you might get upon one of these and stop on it for an hour. If you stopped upon it two hours he expected eight shillings. There was no reduction for quantity.

"UNDER AWNINGS."

Heaven alone knows why, upon a sweltering afternoon, when I should have stayed under awnings somewhere and drunk iced liquids, I rather chose to seek out this owner of equine ruins, and raise the question of hiring one. Of course he said I was right to come to him, and that he had the very thing I wanted. "Napoleon de horse for Massa; oh, him good horse, Napoleon."

So he brought the horse along, and invited me to run my eye over its points before I mounted. I counted fifteen of them, and then gave it up, and said I doubted the horse's constitution. I said, "This horse is not well enough to go out for thirty miles." The man assured me his horse was robust, but the beast himself evidently didn't want to go, and, when he heard my criticism, drooped his head and bent his knees,

and gave a hacking cough, and altogether suggested a poor broken-winded, broken-hearted affair that had had a nodding acquaintance with dissolution for years. The master of him assured me that he was a patient, peaceful horse; just the thing for anybody who was going out to see the country and make notes. I confessed that, so far as that went, the animal was well enough. I like a lethargic, unambitious horse, but this one seemed so utterly wanting in animation. It might be necessary, when inland, to flee suddenly from something tropical. Now, by the look of this horse, I should judge that anything down to an infuriated turtle would easily be able to overtake him if it wanted to. Then the man assured me that "Napoleon" could gallop very efficiently, while, with regard to the furniture of the horse, which I now criticised, he admitted that it was nothing to look at, but declared it to be excellent for every practical purpose. This I doubted. The saddle and bridle and reins and stirrups were all tied on to different parts of the horse with pieces of string. The entire fabric suggested insecurity, if not disaster. I felt I was a fool to go, but something—probably the superior will-power of the man who owned the horse—urged me forward against my inclinations, and ultimately the proprietor of the steed succeeded in getting me safely on to it.



"INVITED ME TO RUN MY EYE OVER ITS POINTS."

Once in the saddle, I became calmer, and even hopeful. A sort of knight-like feeling spread over me. I said to myself, "Now will I wander forth, as the heroes of old, into remote and desolate fastnesses of nature, there to seek such wayside ventures as shall redound, if possible, to my credit."

I was tolerably certain I should meet with at least a single wayside venture, if not more.

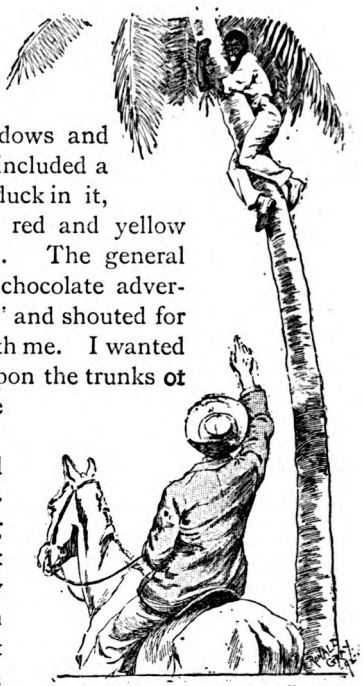
The man wanted me to pay in advance, a thing I declined to do. "Let me stick to one sort of folly at a time," thought I. "To get on to this horse was mildly idiotic; to pay for what I am going to have before I get it would be riotously mad." Afterwards, when the affair was over, I wished I had paid the man to let me off, or paid the assembled crowd to prevent me getting on, or bribed somebody else to go instead. But who can read futurity? What mental apparatus could have foreseen that the procession, almost funereal in pace, which issued out of Scarborough, Tobago, that afternoon, would presently return disordered beyond the power of speech to express, and with celerity only to be described as telegraphic?

I say "procession," because anything more than two constitutes a procession in this island, and anything over ten is regarded as a pageant. My party consisted of four, all told. There were "Napoleon" and myself in the van, and the rear guard was composed of two agile nigger boys. These would assist in the event of any unsatisfactory wayside venture, and, in times of peace, collect such curiosities as I should point out to them upon the route. One was a policeman's son, which fact gave me a sort of confidence in him.

The road led upwards, turning and twisting amidst little thatched huts bowered in plantains. Thorny cacti crowned the hedges, and above them towered many a palm and tamarind and mango tree. Frangipani scented the road, gleaming in little, white, starry blossoms on the gaunt boughs of the parent tree; and a wilderness of purple and yellow convolvulus littered the underwood and festooned the foliage. Upon either hand ascended the wooded heights of the mountains, and from point to point, bursting upwards through rich mingled masses of grey, orange-tawny, and green, there flashed the *bois immortelle*, brilliant and ablaze with flowers like the spikes of a giant crimson coral.

I directed my boys to the right and left; I urged them up trees and into private gardens and elsewhere. They collected seeds and berries and wild fruits; they picked sprigs of guava, bunches of

cotton, and other instructive fragments; then we reached a hut standing in its own grounds. It was rather an advanced, modern sort of hut, with a door and windows and other conveniences. The grounds included a little green puddle with a Muscovy duck in it, a cabbage palm, a row of flaming red and yellow croton plants and some cocoa trees. The general effect suggested one of Cadbury's chocolate advertisements. I reined in "Napoleon," and shouted for somebody to come out and barter with me. I wanted a cocoa pod or two. These hung upon the trunks of the trees, and were very handsome in coats of purple and gold.



"I URGED THEM UP TREES."

Presently a naked baby waddled out of the hut—a quaint and delightful product of nature, like a big brown velvet doll, with great black eyes, fat little stomach, and woolly little head. I liked it much. I even thought of buying it and bringing it home, but the mite would have been almost certain to die, and doubtless must have proved a source of some inconvenience if he had lived.

"LIKE A BIG BROWN VELVET DOLL."

This baby was followed by a tattered negress, to whom I explained my wish.

"Good afternoon, Jane."

"Arternoon, Massa," in the pathetic, sing-song negro voice.

"I want some of your cocoa-pods, Jane."

"No give cocoa-pods to Massa. Dey not ripe to pick, no."

"Jane, this coin is an English shilling, and has upon its face the picture of Her Majesty Queen Victoria. Queen Victoria owns this island, Jane; and you are her subject, and so am I. Therefore, Jane, sell me four cocoa-pods without further delay."

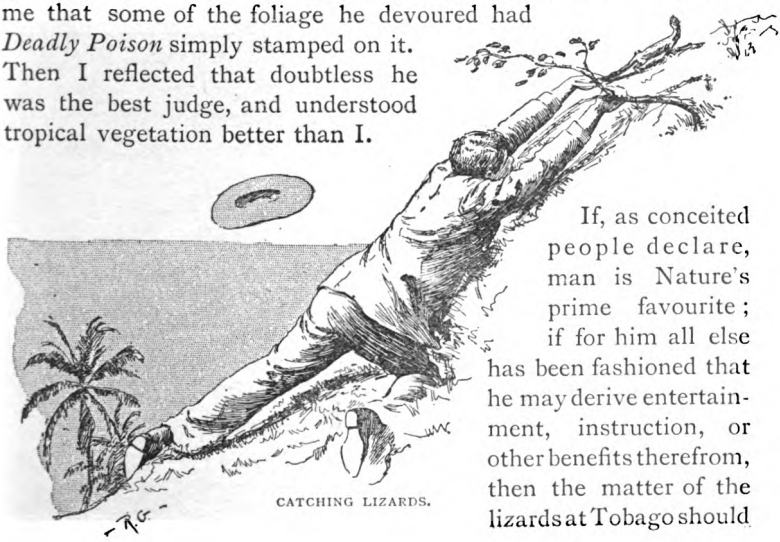
The woman cheered up at the sight of a coin, pushed her brown velvet baby out of the way, and presently plucked me such produce as I desired.

"Thank you ; *good* afternoon, Jane."

"*Good* arternoon, Massa."

The plaintive voice of the Ethiop still lingers upon my ears. Poor, good-humoured, noisy, laughable, lazy, unreliable, exasperating sons and daughters of Africa! Not our own flesh and blood? So say the West Indians. But they seemed human enough to me, and I studied them pretty closely. They lie and thieve and rob their employers, and carry off each others' wives, and love their babies ; they laugh and cry ; they are sick and sorry ; and they put on their best things to go to church in on Sundays. If they had higher intelligence and greater advantages they would be just as human as we are. All the degraded instincts of humanity are there ; they only want more advanced civilisation to bring them out.

But this is a one horse story, and I am overlooking the horse. The fact that I should have thus forgotten him is, of course, greatly to his credit, and as high a compliment as horse need wish to be paid. The trusty steed was, in fact, behaving like a sofa ; indeed, I have known easy chairs with more devil in them. Never, perhaps, did man and horse suit each other better. I wanted to go slowly, and collect things from the hedges, and so did he. The matters he liked he ate. The affairs that attracted me were taken charge of by a boy. Sometimes the horse and I had a fancy for the same concern ; then it was a toss-up who got it. I felt rather nervous for "Napoleon" at first. It struck me that some of the foliage he devoured had *Deadly Poison* simply stamped on it. Then I reflected that doubtless he was the best judge, and understood tropical vegetation better than I.

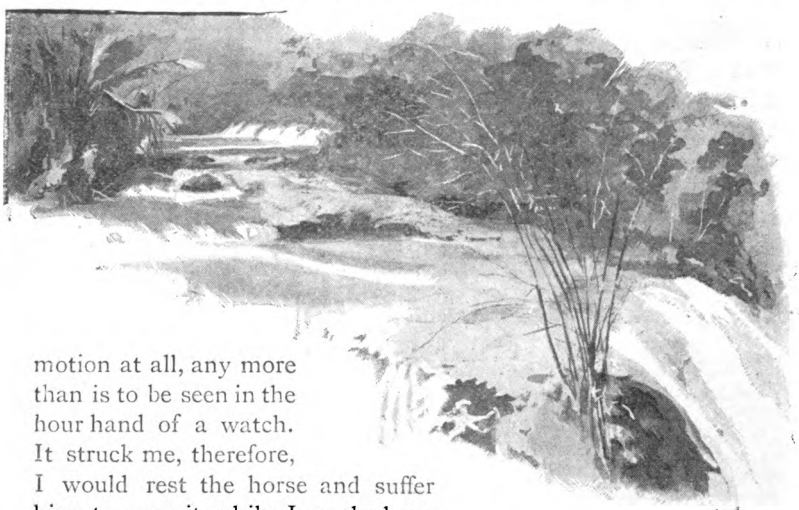


CATCHING LIZARDS.

If, as conceited people declare, man is Nature's prime favourite ; if for him all else has been fashioned that he may derive entertainment, instruction, or other benefits therefrom, then the matter of the lizards at Tobago should

be looked into. Nothing is being done with them, and yet they were placed there for some set purpose, no doubt. They swarm—indeed, saurians of every kind thrive well in this island. Alligators may be found somewhere in the backwater of a stream I am now riding to visit; and iguanas also occur, which is weak of them, because they are eaten with delight whenever they do. As for lizards, here they are in thousands: black, grey, brown, red-headed, green-backed, striped, speckled, golden-eyed, large as rats, small as tadpoles, active, indolent, plucky, and nervous. If you should chance to lay hold upon a lizard by the tail—a thing possible to the energetic—he will desert his appendage without an instant's hesitation, and leave it in your hand. It is declared that they grow new tails, but I cannot speak to the truth of that. One may make a fine collection of tails, and, as a fact, I amassed four myself; but a mere bodiless tail is insipid, and at last I grew disheartened with the lonely, unfinished look of the things, and parted from them.

About half-a-mile from the waterfall and river I designed to visit, "Napoleon" began making some curious experiments with a view to ascertaining how slowly it was possible to progress without absolutely stopping dead. At times I could detect no



motion at all, any more than is to be seen in the hour hand of a watch. It struck me, therefore, I would rest the horse and suffer him to recruit while I pushed on alone; so, dismounting, I gave him into the keeping of my two boys, and told them I should presently return.

The stream and waterfall were beautiful enough, buried in the heart of a luxuriant wilderness. Great trees, decked with veils of

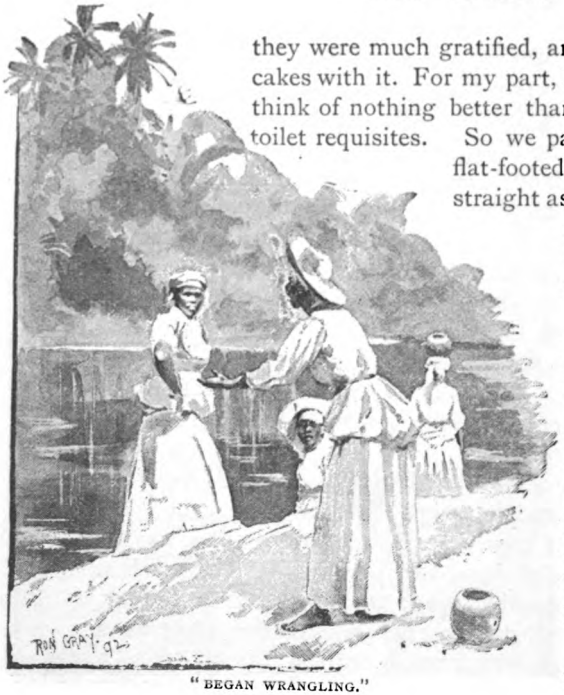
grey lichen and adorned with crimson and white orchid blossoms, hung over it; other growths of anthurium, vast-leaved philodendra, ferns and trailing parasites innumerable, covered the steep banks and tree stems with a glorious tangle of bewildering tropical life; and upon every bough or branch, where their flying seeds had found resting places, the little dog pines clustered, sending up sprightly heads, but bearing no fruit. The hillsides were rich in wild plantain, wild indigo, guinea-grass, cotton, cashew and cabbage palms, and a thousand other brilliant and beautiful trees, laced and fretted with jagged and naked boughs, rising like rocks above a green sea. One handsome shrub on the river's brink glowed with gorgeous wealth of purple flowers; and, in the little cups of them, fluttered tiny green humming-birds, like living emeralds, that flashed fire against the deep blue sky above.

The stream itself was somewhat similar to others I have seen at home in Devonshire and elsewhere. Great volcanic boulders were liberally dotted in its course; and it bustled along merrily with whirls and eddies, and, here and there, still, silent reaches. But where brake fern and heather fringe my admired trout streams, here I find tree ferns, and, perhaps, prickly sensitive plant, or a great screen of stephanotis, with never a trout.

Then I thought about the alligators, and was glad I had not brought the horse along here, because one of these voracious reptiles might have marked my bony steed down for prey; in which case there would probably have been one alligator less, and certainly one horse, while I should have had to walk back to town. It chanced that sundry black maidens were filling calabashes at the stream, and them I asked for news respecting the aforesaid saurians. They had nothing to say about alligators, but gave me a good deal of information, mostly unreliable, concerning other matters. They never stuck for a word, and told me the name of anything without a moment's hesitation. But all these girls had different names for the same concern; they began wrangling among themselves and criticising one another's knowledge.

Once or twice I confounded them myself; and when I expressed an opinion, gave a definite name to anything, or made an assertion, they always fell in with it at once, appeared much relieved, and admitted that I was right, they were wrong.

They put a name to every tree and flower and fruit, not because necessarily they knew the name, but because they assumed I did not, and because they fancied it gave me pleasure to note down information. I handed the girls a shilling presently, and



"BEGAN WRANGLING."

they were much gratified, and said they should buy cakes with it. For my part, I told them that I could think of nothing better than cakes, unless, maybe, toilet requisites. So we parted, they going their flat-footed, happy way, each straight as a dart, with a calabash of water on her head, I returning to my steed and his attendants.

Upon reaching them I found that "Napoleon" and one of my boys had got into trouble, and the second boy was missing. A big buck negro, in a high gale of rage, came forward, holding the boy by the ear and the horse by the bridle.

"Hullo! What's the matter, John?"

"Plenty matter. Yo' boy a dam tief, sar; an' yo' horse a dam tief, too."

I could see by the look upon the faces of the boy and the horse that he was right. It appeared that the horse had eaten about ten square yards of this man's pigeon peas, and the boy had been at the bananas. Of course it was the policeman's son.

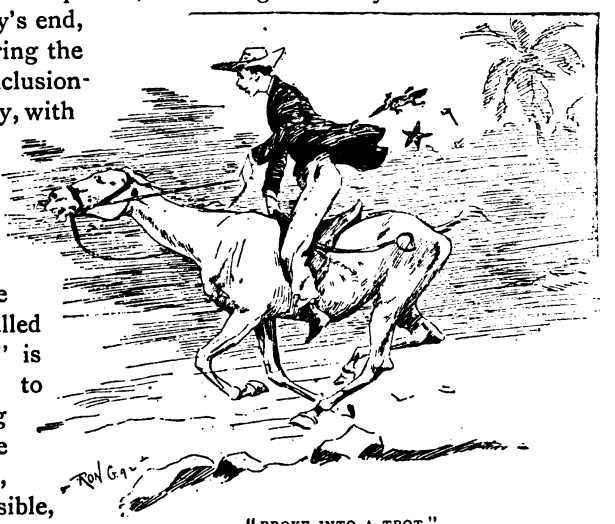
"YO' BOY A DAM TIEF, SAR."

"Bad, wickedest boy in island, sar; most rude, pertinent young fellow, sar."

The boy's interest was centred in me. He evidently felt that

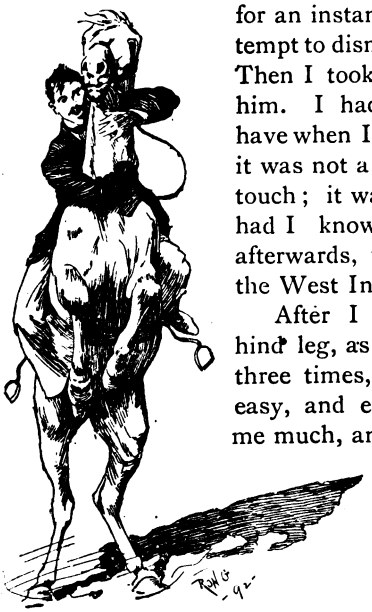
if I deserted him now he was lost. Between them my party had misapplied about a dollar's worth of the negro's agricultural produce. This sum quieted him down; he held my horse while I mounted, and the reprieved boy collected my things. Then we pushed on, and, almost immediately afterwards, my other boy came through a hole in the hedge. After him he was dragging divers quaint and utterly impracticable curiosities. I checked him here. I commended his zeal; but I was collecting curios, not this untutored lad, and I pointed out that all selection must be left to me. For him remained the humbler task of obedience, of securing, at any personal risk, the objects which my judgment pointed to as being desirable. I therefore discarded half a tree the boy had fetched along, and told him, with regard to a live frog of enormous size (the which he was tolerably certain I should glory in), that it must be returned to its home. Then the boy grew lazy and discouraged, and gave up trying, and showed no further ambition to distinguish himself, or find choice treasures.

And here, practically upon the last page of this narrative, does my one horse yarn properly begin. We were crossing a little bridge, distant scarce three hundred yards from our destination, when "Napoleon," realising suddenly that he had reached his journey's end, took a fancy to bring the excursion to its conclusion in style. Suddenly, without a premonitory symptom, he broke into a trot. No earthquake or volcanic irruption was ever more unexpected or uncalled for; and "broke" is exactly the word to use, for, concerning this trot, it was the most lamentable, lop-sided, irresponsible, disconnected, convulsive, and inartistic thing that I had ever seen a horse do. His idea was to show himself off. He never thought about me. Of course, I trotted too, when the first shock was past, but my



"BROKE INTO A TROT."

curiosities would not catch the action, and they began shooting out of my pockets and different receptacles, and getting lost. Then I tried to urge him into a gallop, which I imagined would be just as easy and showy for him, and smoother for me and my curios. However, he either would not or could not gallop. It then occurred to me that he might be a natural "pacer," but though evidently a master of most equestrian styles, "pacing" did not seem to be his *forte*. My local objects of interest were now flying about in every direction. The horse had lost its temper, and mine was going. I endeavoured to wound his pride. "Brute!" said I, "you shan't show yourself off at all. You shall walk every yard of the way home." But when it came to the point, he simply refused to walk. "Then," said I, "bless you, you shall stand still." Of course he declined to stand still for an instant. It struck me that if I got off him, his feelings would be hurt, and we might argue it out better; but he would not hear of that for an instant either, and implied that any attempt to dismount must be made at my own risk. Then I took the advice of the boys and smote him. I had the sort of luck that I generally have when I take advice. The boys were wrong; it was not a horse to hit; it was not a horse to touch; it was not a horse to have got on at all, had I known; and it was, as they told me afterwards, the most difficult horse to get off in the West Indies.



"AFTER I HIT HIM."

After I hit him he curveted about on one hind leg, as if he was full of springs, snorted three times, and then settled down into a free, easy, and extremely rapid gait, which cheered me much, and suited me well, until it suddenly became evident that the brute was running away. But where? Into the sea, evidently. There was nowhere else for him to run. If he dashed on to the wharf I should be as good as dead, because it was only a small wharf, and we must go over the edge and sink down together among the sharks; if he stuck to the beach, which I believed ran all round the island, it might be possible to turn the affair into a circus, and so escape. I know the rule with runaway horses is to stop on them as long

as they will let you. Often, however, some inequality in the landscape will bring about a separation, despite a man's best endeavours to keep mounted. "Napoleon" hesitated upon reaching the wharf, then bounded forward on to the sands, and tore along with unabated speed. Even at that moment, the only idea in my mind was one of amazement that the vile, hypochondriacal horse could flash out in this way, and should have thus concealed such a mass of latent energy from my experienced eye.

We must have presented a magnificent spectacle to onlookers. I felt the affair ought to have been printed in colours, and sent to a Christmas number. "Racing from Cannibals" would not have been a bad title, or "The King's Courier," or "The Coming Tide." Inland there was a row of cocoa-nut palms fringing the strand. Beneath these palms resided negroes in little huts; and now many men, women, and children rushed out to see me fly by, and howled and screamed, and mentioned that, at a place further on, the sand stopped, and rocks and deep pools broke the monotony of the beach. I thanked them, but felt that if their facts were right, my circus scheme would be nipped in the bud. Presently I saw the horrors they described ahead, and had just begun wondering whether it would be better to hold on and chance it or get off upon the right side of the steed or the left, when, owing to some important piece of string breaking beneath the horse, I fell off behind, together with the saddle and other trappings. How it came about that "Napoleon" did not brain me as I fell, nobody could explain, but Death held aloof, albeit a coral strand is not the softest thing in the world to fall upon.

By the time I recovered and counted my limbs and joints and talked a little to the people, some officious idiots had managed to capture the horse, tie on its furniture again, and bring it back to me subdued and crushed. They asked me if I was going to ride back, but I said I proposed walking back, just for a change, so that I might pick up shells and look at the sunset. Then they began bothering me as to what they should do with the local horse; and I lost my temper, and told them.

My white friends declared afterwards that I was very lucky to have seen "Napoleon" at his best. He was one of the wonders of the island, they explained.

"That horse has good blood hidden away in it somewhere, though you would never think so," said the Harbour Master of Tobago.

"For that matter, so have I, and I want to keep it in me, not sprinkle a tropical beach with it,' I answered.

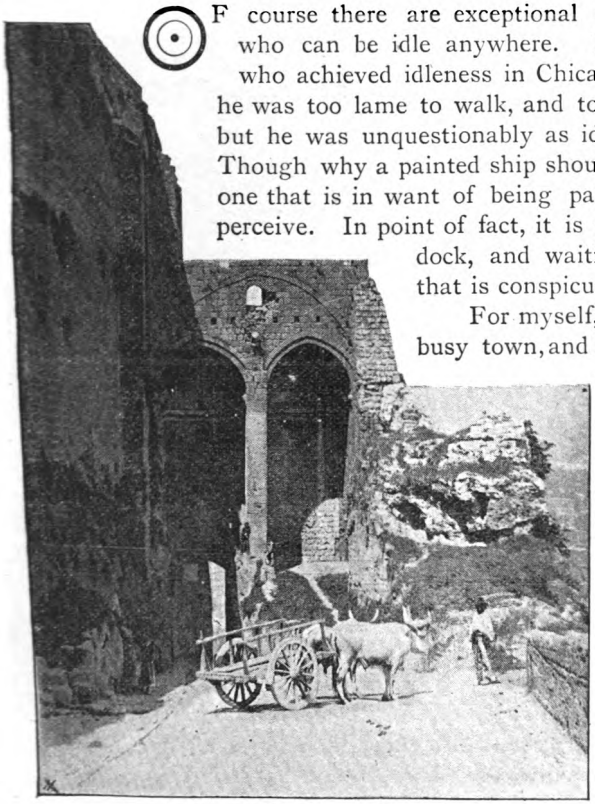
Of course, if heredity was responsible for my horse's conduct, the case against him appeared altered in some measure. But when I next went exploring, I chose a mean, perfectly abject horse, that everybody assured me had not a solitary drop of good blood hidden away in it anywhere—a sort of horse that dozed and dawdled and yawned through life, and was always leaning up against things to rest.

Pleasant Idling Places.

ORVIETO.

By W. L. Alden.

OF course there are exceptional men, of rare genius, who can be idle anywhere. I once knew a man who achieved idleness in Chicago. It is true that he was too lame to walk, and too religious to swear, but he was unquestionably as idle as a painted ship. Though why a painted ship should be more idle than one that is in want of being painted, I do not quite perceive. In point of fact, it is the idle ship, lying in dock, and waiting to be chartered, that is conspicuously devoid of paint.



OUTSIDE THE WALLS, ORVIETO.

For myself, I cannot be idle in a busy town, and I have only found two places where complete idleness is possible. These are Venice and Orvieto. Most men may be fairly idle at Ravenna, and if one has practised the art elsewhere he may idle for a short time very creditably in Cremona; but perfect idleness demands the environment of either Venice or Orvieto. You can, perhaps, be more idle in St. Mark's Place than in any one spot in Orvieto, but take Orvieto as a whole, and it has no superior in its advantages for idling.

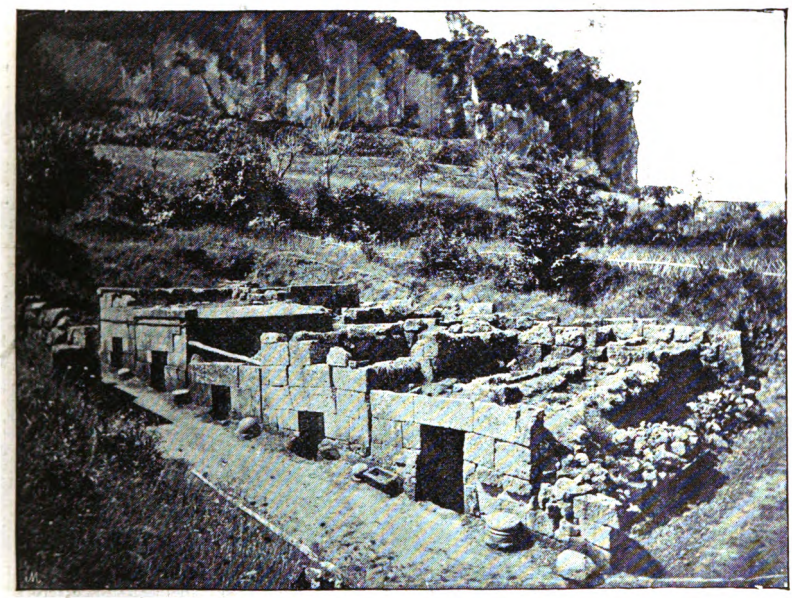
The town is set on a hill, which rises perpendicularly from the surrounding plain. Scientific people tell us that it is a mass of tufa, thrown up by the extinct volcano of Bolsena. When this statement is made to you, and you answer it by asking how a volcano could throw up an isolated mountain fifteen or twenty miles from its crater, you think you have the scientific person on the hip, but, like most of his kind, he has a repartee ready for you in the shape of a statement that, after the volcano had filled the plain full of tufa, the Tiber came and washed it all away, except the precise hill on which Orvieto stands. If you are a good man,

ORVIETO.

and do not wish to tempt your scientific friend, you make no reply to this assertion, and so make it unnecessary for him to burden his soul with any further scientific stretchers.

Whatever may be the truth about the alleged conduct of the volcano and the river, there can be no doubt that man has had his share in making the hill of Orvieto, for its sides show that in many places the rock has been cut away, and made unscaleable, except by certain easily defended paths. In the course of many centuries the crumbling of the rock has lowered the apparent height, and

diminished the apparent perpendicularity of Orvieto, but it is still inaccessible except by three paths. There is the mule path up which the Popes climbed when they lived in Orvieto. Then there is the modern carriage road which winds around the hill, and enables the patient traveller to reach the town after an hour's drive. And then there is the new funicular railway, by which travellers who do not resent the essential wickedness of a railway which defies Nature by ascending at an angle of forty-five degrees, may reach the city in five minutes from the railway station.



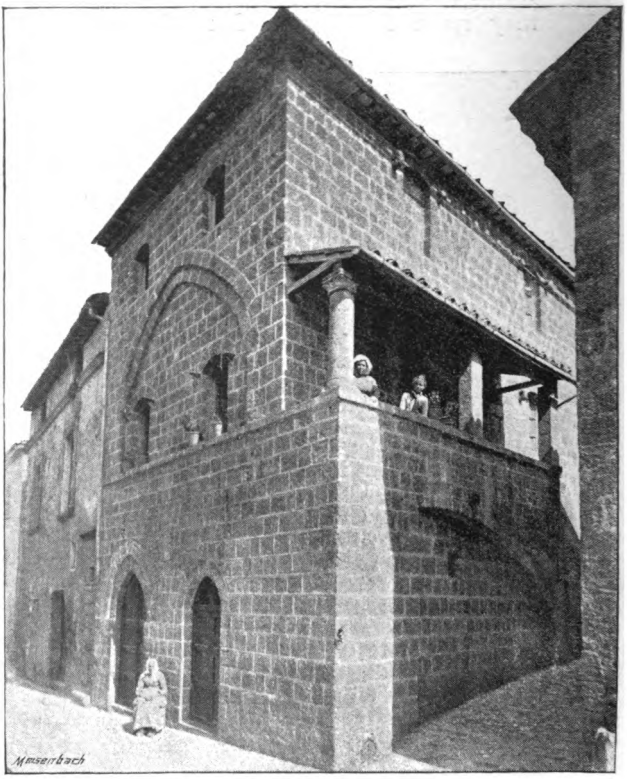
ETRUSCAN CEMETERY, ORVIETO

Nervous people prefer the carriage road. Not, of course, because they are afraid, but because their sensitive souls resent the anachronism of a funicular railway in Orvieto.

Orvieto is so ancient that her origin is unknown. When first heard of, she was one of the cities of Etruria. Lars Porsenna of Clusium, who had the lavish and reprehensible habit of swearing by nine distinct gods all at once, was a near neighbour of Orvieto, and she probably joined him in his celebrated Tarquinius Relief Expedition. The original Etruscan inhabitants of the town spent their whole lives in collecting Greek pottery, and afterwards smash-

ing it, which fact is fully established by the researches of antiquarians. They even took their pottery into the tomb with them when they died. A necropolis full of Etruscans and broken crockery has lately been discovered at the foot of the hill, and the exhumed pottery and the pieces thereof are for sale in the Orvieto curiosity shops.

In the Middle Ages, the Popes, who now feel themselves to be terribly wronged because they cannot live in any part of Rome except the Vatican, went to live at Orvieto, apparently because the Roman people were anxious to have them stay in Rome. Some thirty of them lived at Orvieto, and it might not be a bad solution of the Papal question of the present day were Orvieto to be given to the Pope as his own, on condition that he would cease to play at being atrociously wronged because the Romans will not have him for their king. Though, to be sure, the Orvietans might have something to say in the matter, for undoubtedly the Pope would lose no time in abolishing that heretical funicular railway, of which they are rather more proud than they are of their cathedral.



A PALACE, ORVIETO.

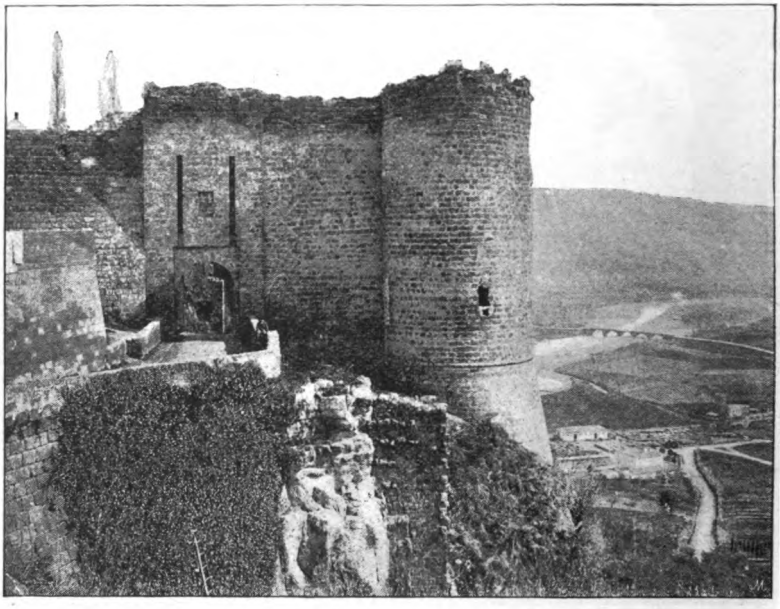
I have a peculiarly tender recollection of the Vicar of Orvieto who is mentioned in that cotton-velvet romance, Bulwer's "Rienzi,"

He was a supporter of the Tribune, and his duty was to undergo the tremendously turgid speeches in which Rienzi was accustomed to express himself on all occasions. I used particularly to admire a passage in which Rienzi, after having informed the Vicar that the nobles had tried to assassinate him, remarked, "They sup with me to-night! Vicar, forwards!" When I was a boy I could never read those sublime words without a thrill; and on one occasion, having had a quarrel with the local small boys over (I think) a question of mumble-te-peg, I invited them to tea, intending to rise after the bread and butter, and denounce them in the manner of Rienzi. But the bread and butter were so uncommonly good that I laid aside my vengeful purpose and condescended to leapfrog.

CITY GATE, ORVIETO.

If you go to Orvieto in winter you will make a mistake. It is windy, cold, and at times there is an air of haste and business about the inhabitants. This is delusive, for when the Orvietan seems to be in a hurry he is only trying to keep warm by exercise. Still this sort of thing mars the repose of the place, and is inimical to idling. Yet, if you should happen to go to Orvieto just before Lent, you will find a real carnival in progress. The Roman carnival now consists of a few Anglo-Saxons in balconies, who throw confetti at a few Germans in carriages, and then sadly

remark among themselves that the Italians are a frivolous people, and that the carnival is a relic of heathenism. In Orvieto, on the contrary, everybody goes into the street in some improvised costume, and dances in the Piazza to the music of a band. The dancing is rather exciting, for the pavement slopes at a steep angle, so that you waltz laboriously up hill, then regain your breath on the level and finally plunge down the descent at a giddy rate of speed. The costumes are in some respects peculiar. The young women usually disguise themselves in their night-

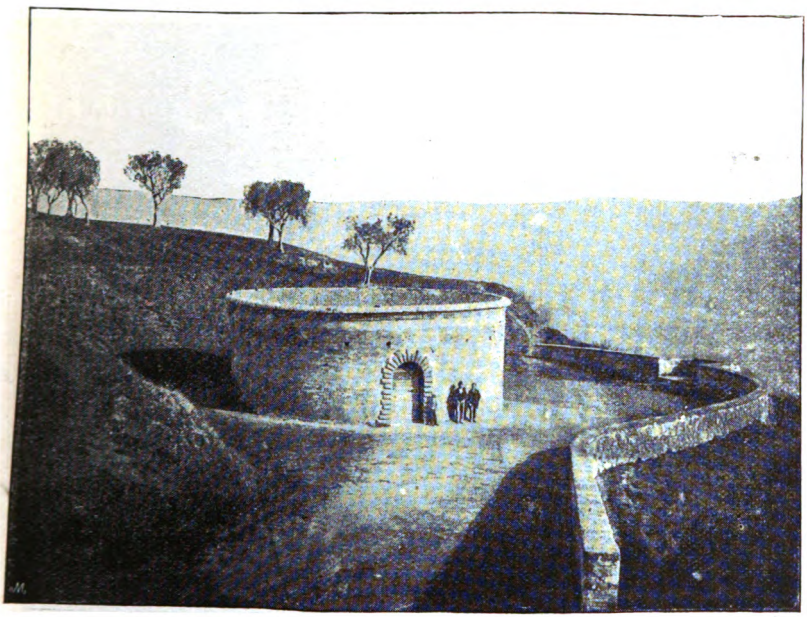


FORTRESS OF CARDINAL ALBORNOZ, ORVIETO.

gowns, with the addition of a veil drawn tightly over the face, and a bell-rope tied around the waist. But they really enjoy themselves, and when one of them has seized upon you, and whirled you away in a Strauss waltz, you suddenly become a lover of Nature, and say to yourself that the simple natural night-gown is infinitely prettier than the red and pink silk domino that you waltzed with in some more sophisticated town than Orvieto.

Go to Orvieto in the summer if you wish for dreamy repose. At the Hotel of the Fine Arts, where you will inevitably go,

you will find three other tourists, probably Germans, sitting silently in a vast room, and waiting for dinner, which is the only thing the tourist does in Orvieto after he has seen the Cathedral. You will see occasional shops in the street, but the shopkeeper never dreams of selling anything, and doubtless selects shopkeeping as an avocation solely because it enables him to spend his whole time sitting drowsily in his big chair, and watching the sparrows through the open door. The only shop in which there is any life is that of the dealer in antiquities. If you enter it and hammer on the counter there will come to you after a while a

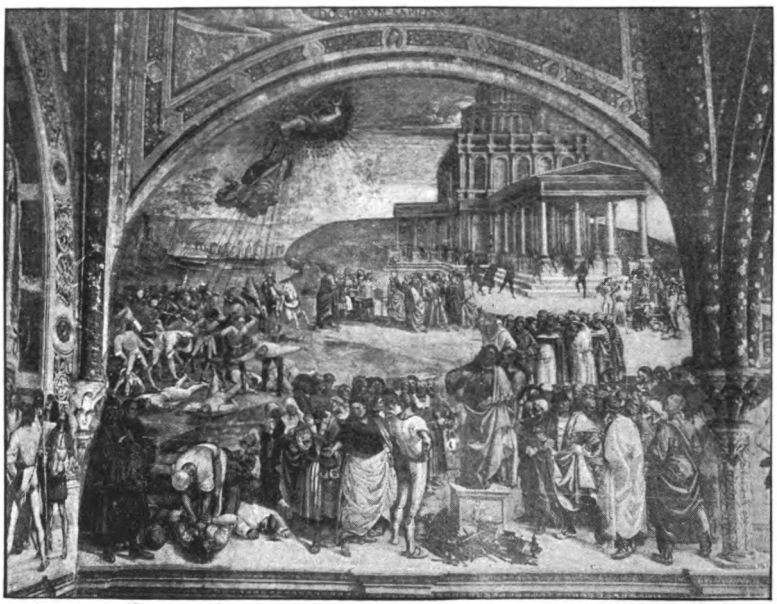


WELL OF S. PATRIZIO, ORVIETO.

sleepy youth, in the act of finishing a hasty toilette, who will inform you that the proprietor will arrive instantly, and who will then go to some other part of the town and drag the proprietor out of bed. I am not an expert in ancient pottery myself, but I should say that Orvieto was an excellent place to pick up remarkable vases. Those which the proprietor of the shop has reconstructed from broken fragments are wonderful in their way. They remind you of what women used to term a crazy quilt. The most hardened antiquary cannot but admire vases constructed of equal

parts of Etruscan and Greek pottery, and decorated with paintings in which a Greek column unexpectedly turns into an Etruscan woman, and ends in a war chariot.

I am not going to describe the Cathedral. I will only say that the man who dies without seeing it has lived in vain. Next to St. Mark's, it is to me the most beautiful building on earth, and it contains the priceless treasure of frescoes by Fra Angelico and Luca Signorelli, and wonderful reliefs modelled by Andrea and Giovanni Pisano. Among the frescoes is the most thoroughly delightful representation of Hell that I have ever seen. It repre-



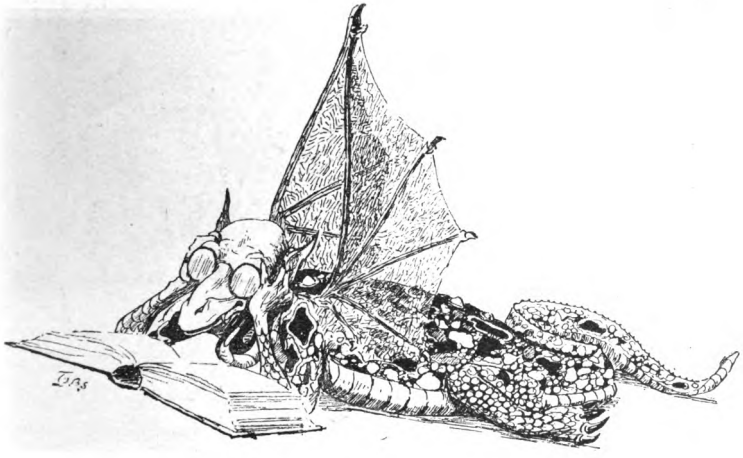
"PREACHING OF ANTICHRIST," BY LUCA SIGNORELLI (ORVIETO CATHEDRAL).

sents the place as having, perhaps, rather more snakes than one could desire, but with this exception it is nearly as picturesque and amusing as a Parisian public ball. I am certain that the daily contemplation of this fresco would greatly soothe and encourage the leaders of that political party to which you and I, reader, do not belong.

After you have seen the Cathedral, there are still miles of narrow and picturesque streets in which you can idle, and constantly see something that will delight you in a lazy and soothing way.

You can wander to the edge of the city and look off over leagues of historic landscape. And then, when the Rome express is due, you can go to the funicular railway station and watch the car ascending. This is what nine-tenths of all the inhabitants of Orvieto have done at least once a day for the last two years, and they never seem to tire of the spectacle.

One word more. If you wish to admire the Siena Cathedral, see it before you have seen that of Orvieto. Most people think that they are wonderfully alike, which shows that they have never really seen either of them. If you have enjoyed the Orvieto Cathedral as you ought to enjoy it, and then go to Siena, you will be disappointed. Whereas, if you go to Siena first, you can enjoy two cathedrals instead of one.



THE READER.

Novel Notes.

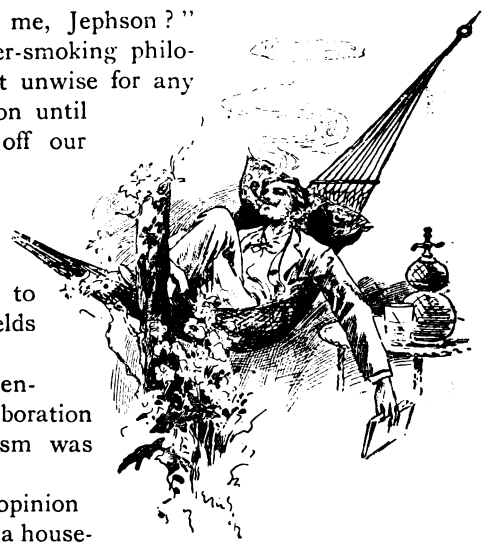
By Jerome K. Jerome.

Illustrated by J. Gülich.

WE held our next business meeting on my houseboat. Brown was opposed at first to my going down to this houseboat at all. He thought that none of us should leave town while the novel was still on hand.

"Don't you agree with me, Jephson?" he added, turning to that ever-smoking philosopher. "Don't you think it unwise for any of us to go away from London until this book is finished, and off our minds?"

"Well," growled Jephson, without removing his pipe from his mouth, "personally, I must confess I should like to see the dear old trees and fields once more before I die."



"WRITING A REALLY GREAT WORK"

Jephson never had been enthusiastic about this collaboration scheme. But then enthusiasm was not in his nature.

MacShaugnassy was of opinion that we should work better on a houseboat. He thought that, surrounded by the calm of nature, the literary spirit might descend upon us in greater quantities than had hitherto been the case. Speaking for himself, he said he never felt more like writing a really great work than when lying in a hammock among whispering leaves, with the deep blue sky above him, and a tumbler of iced claret cup within easy reach of his hand.

Failing a hammock, he found a deck chair a great incentive to mental labour. In the interests of the novel, he strongly recommended me to take down with me at least one comfortable deck chair, and plenty of lemons.

I could not myself see any reason why we should not be able to think as well on a houseboat as anywhere else, and accordingly it was settled that I should go down and establish myself upon the thing, and that the others should visit me there from time to time, when we would sit round and toil.

This houseboat was Ethelbertha's idea. We had spent a day, the summer before, on one belonging to a friend of mine, and she had been enraptured with the life. Everything was on such a delightfully tiny scale. You lived in a tiny little room; you slept on a tiny little bed, in a tiny, tiny little bedroom; and you cooked your little dinner by a tiny little fire, in the tiniest little kitchen that ever you did see. "Oh, it must be lovely, living on a houseboat," said Ethelbertha, with a gasp of ecstasy; "it must be like living in a doll's house."

"SITTING ON THE FLOOR, BEFORE A RED BRICK MANSION."

Ethelbertha was very young—ridiculously young, as I think I have mentioned before—in these days of which I am writing, and the love of dolls, and of the gorgeous dresses that dolls wear, and of the many-windowed but inconveniently arranged houses that dolls inhabit—or are supposed to inhabit, for as a rule they seem to prefer sitting on the roof with their legs dangling down over the front door, which has always appeared to me to be unladylike. But then, of course, I am no authority on doll etiquette—had not yet, I think, quite departed from her. Nay, am I not sure that it had not? Do I not remember, years later, peeping into a certain room, the walls of which are covered with works of art of a character calculated to send any æsthetic person mad in less than half an hour, and seeing her, sitting on the floor, before a red brick mansion, containing two rooms and a kitchen; and are not her hands trembling with delight as she arranges the three real tin plates upon the dresser? And does she not knock at the real

brass knocker upon the real front door until it comes off, and I have to sit down beside her on the floor and screw it on again?

Perhaps, however, it is unwise for me to recall these things, and bring them forward thus in evidence against her, for cannot she in turn laugh at me? Did not I also assist in the arrangement and appointment of that house beautiful? We differed on the matter of the drawing-room carpet, I recollect. Ethelbertha fancied a dark blue velvet, but I felt sure, taking the wall-paper into consideration, that some shade of terra-cotta would harmonise best. She agreed with me in the end, and we manufactured one out of an old chest protector, and laid it down. It had a really charming effect, and gave a delightfully warm tone to the room. The blue velvet we put in the kitchen. I deemed this extravagance myself, but Ethelbertha said that servants thought a lot of a good carpet, and that it paid to humour them in little things, when practicable.

"ETHELBERTHA FANCIED A DARK BLUE VELVET."

The bedroom had one big bed and a cot in it; but I could not see where the girl was going to sleep. The architect had overlooked her altogether: that is so like an architect. The house also suffered from the inconvenience common to residences of its class, of possessing no stairs, so that to move from one room to another it was necessary to burst your way up through the ceiling, or else to come outside and climb in through a window; either of which methods must be fatiguing when you come to do it often.

Apart from these drawbacks, however, the house was one that any doll agent would have been justified in describing as a "most desirable family residence"; and it had been furnished with a lavishness that bordered on positive ostentation. In the bedroom there was a washing-stand, and on the washing-stand there stood a jug and basin, and in the jug there was real water. But all this was as nothing. I have known mere ordinary, middle-class dolls,

houses in which you might find washing-stands and jugs and basins and real water—aye, and even soap. But in this abode of luxury there was a real towel; so that a body could not only wash himself, but wipe himself afterwards, and that is a sensation that, as all dolls know, can be enjoyed only in the very first-class houses.

Then, in the drawing-room, there was a clock, which would go on ticking so long as ever you continued to shake it (it never seemed to get tired); also a picture and a piano, and a book upon the table, and a vase of flowers that would tip over and upset the moment you touched it, just like a real vase of flowers. Oh, there was style about this room, I can tell you.

But the glory of the house was its kitchen. There were all things that heart could desire in this kitchen, saucepans with lids that took on and off, a flat-iron and a rolling-pin. A dinner service for three occupied about half the room, and what space was left was filled up by the stove—a *real* stove! Think of it, oh, ye owners of dolls' houses, a stove in which you could burn real bits of coal, and on which you could boil real bits of potato for dinner—except when people said you mustn't, because it was dangerous, and took the grate away from you, and blew out the fire, a thing that hampers a cook.

"THE FAMILY."

I never saw a house more complete in all its details. Nothing had been overlooked, not even the family. There it lay on its back, just outside the front door, proud but calm, waiting to be put into possession. It was not an extensive family. It consisted of four—papa, and mamma, and baby, and the hired girl; just the family for a beginner.

It was a well-dressed family too—not merely with grand clothes outside, covering a shameful condition of things beneath, such as, alas! is too often the case in doll society, but with every article necessary and proper to a lady or gentleman, down to items that I could not mention. And all these garments, you must know, could be unfastened and taken off. I have known dolls—stylish enough dolls, to look at, some of them—who have been content to go about with their clothes gummed on to them, and,

in some cases, nailed on with tin-tacks, which I take to be a slovenly and unhealthy habit. But this family could be undressed in five minutes without the aid of either hot water or a chisel.

Not that it was advisable from an artistic point of view that any of them should be undressed. They had not the figure that looks well in its natural state—none of them. There was a want of fullness about them all. Besides, without their clothes, it might have been difficult to distinguish the baby from the papa, or the maid from the mistress, and thus domestic complications might have arisen.

"IN AN ATTITUDE SUGGESTIVE OF DRINK."

When all was ready for their reception we established them in their home. We put as much of the baby to bed as the cot would hold, and made the papa and mamma comfortable in the drawing-room, where they sat on the floor and stared thoughtfully at each other across the table. (They had to sit on the floor because the chairs were not big enough.) The girl we placed in the kitchen, where she leant against the dresser in an attitude suggestive of drink, embracing the broom we had given her with maudlin affection. Then we lifted up the house with care and carried it cautiously into another room, and with the deftness of experienced conspirators, placed it at the foot of a small bed, on the south-west corner of which an absurdly small somebody had hung an absurdly small stocking.

To return to our own doll's house, Ethelbertha and I, discussing the subject during our return journey in the train, resolved that, next year, we ourselves would possess a houseboat, a smaller houseboat, if possible, than even the one we had just seen. It should have art-muslin curtains and a flag, and the flowers about it should be wild roses and forget-me-nots. I could work all the morning on the roof, with an awning over me to keep off the sun, while Ethelbertha trimmed the roses and made cakes for tea; and in the evenings we would sit out on the little deck, and Ethelbertha would play the guitar (she would begin learning it at once), or we could sit quiet and listen to the nightingales.

For, when you are very, very young, you dream that the

summer is all sunny days and moonlight nights, that the wind blows always softly from the west, and that roses will thrive anywhere. But, as you grow older, you grow tired of waiting for the dull grey sky to break. So you close the door and come in, and crouch over the fire, wondering why the winds blow ever from the east: and you have given up trying to rear roses.

I knew a little cottage girl who saved up her money for months and months so as to buy a new frock to go to a flower show in. But the day of the flower show was a nasty wet day, so she wore an old frock instead. And all the fête days for quite a long while were nasty wet days, and she feared she would never have a chance of wearing her pretty white dress. But at last there came a fête day morning that was bright and sunny, and then that little cottage girl clapped her hands and ran upstairs, and took her new frock (which had been her "new frock" for so long a time that it was now the oldest frock she had) from the box where it lay neatly folded between lavender and thyme, and held it up, and laughed to think how nice she would look in it.

But when she went to put it on, she found that she had outgrown it, and that it was too small for her every way. So she had to wear a common old frock after all.

"THEY MET AGAIN."

Things happen that way, you know, in this world. There were a boy and girl once who loved each other very dearly. But they were both poor, so they agreed to wait till he had made enough money for them to live comfortably upon, and then they would marry and be happy. It took him a long while to do, because making money is very slow work, and he wanted, while he was about it, to make enough for them to be very happy upon indeed. He accomplished the task eventually, however, and came back home a wealthy man.

Then they met again in the same poorly-furnished parlour where they had parted. But they did not sit as near to each other as they had sat then. For she had lived alone so long that she had grown prim and old-maidish, and she was feeling vexed with him for having dirtied the carpet with his muddy boots. And he

had worked so long earning money that he had grown hard and cold like the money itself, and was trying to think of something affectionate to say to her.

So for a while they sat, one each side of the paper "fire-stove ornament," both wondering why they had shed such scalding tears on that day they had kissed each other good-bye; then said "good-bye" again, and were glad.

There is another tale with much the same moral that I learnt at school out of a copybook. If I remember rightly, it runs somewhat like this:

Once upon a time there lived a wise grasshopper and a foolish ant. All through the pleasant summer weather, the grasshopper sported and played, gambolling with his fellows in and out among the sunbeams, dining sumptuously each day on leaves and dew-drops, never troubling about the morrow, singing ever his one peaceful, droning song.

"BURIED HIM."

Then there came the cruel winter, and the grasshopper, looking round, saw that his friends, the flowers, lay dead, and knew thereby that his own little span was drawing near its close.

Then he felt glad that he had been so happy, and had not wasted his life. "It has been very short," said he to himself; "but it has been very pleasant, and I think I have made the best use of it. I have drunk in the sunshine, I have lain on the soft, warm air, I have played merry games in the waving grass, I have tasted the juice of the sweet green leaves. I have done what I could. I have spread my wings, I have sung my song. Now I will thank God for the sunny days that are passed, and die."

Saying which, he crawled under a brown leaf and met his fate in the way that all brave grasshoppers should; and a little bird that was passing by picked him up tenderly and buried him.

Now when the foolish ant saw this, she was greatly puffed up with Pharisaical conceit. "How thankful I ought to be," said she, "that I am industrious and prudent, and not like this poor grasshopper. While he was flitting about from flower to flower, and enjoying himself, I was hard at work, putting by against the winter. Now he is dead, while I am about to make myself cosy in my warm home, and eat all the good things that I have been saving up."

But, as she spoke, the gardener came along with his spade, and levelled the hill where she dwelt to the ground, and left her lying dead amidst the ruins.

Then the same kind little bird that had buried the grasshopper came and picked her out and buried her also; and afterwards he composed and sang a song, the burthen of which was "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may." It was a very pretty song, and a very wise song, and a man who lived in those days, and to whom the birds, loving him and feeling that he was almost one of themselves, had taught their language, fortunately overheard it and wrote it down, so that all may read it to this day.

Unhappily for us, however, Fate is a harsh governess, who has no sympathy with our desire for rosebuds. "Don't stop to pick flowers now, my dear," she cries, in her sharp, cross tones, as she seizes our arm and jerks us back into the roadway; "we haven't time to-day. We will come back again to-morrow, and you shall pick them then."

"CAN YOU SWIM, AMENDA?"

And we have to follow her, knowing, if we are experienced children, that the chances are that we shall never come that way again; or that, if we do, it will be when the roses are dead.

Fate would not hear of our having a houseboat that summer—which was an exceptionally fine summer—but promised us that if we were good and saved up our money we should have one next year; and Ethelbertha and I, being simple-minded, inexperienced children, were content with the promise, and had faith in its satisfactory fulfilment.

As soon as we reached home, we informed Amenda of our plan. The moment the girl opened the door, Ethelbertha burst out with:

"Oh! can you swim, Amenda?"

"No, mum," answered Amenda, with entire absence of curiosity as to why such a question had been addressed to her, "I never knew but one girl as could, and she got drowned."

"Well, you'll have to make haste and learn, then," continued Ethelbertha, "because you won't be able to walk out with your young man, you'll have to swim out. We're not going to live in a house any more. We're going to live on a little boat in the middle of the river."

Ethelbertha's chief object in life at this period was to surprise and shock Amenda, and her chief sorrow, that she had never succeeded in doing so. She had hoped great things from this announcement, but the girl remained unmoved. "Oh, are you mum," she replied; and then went on to speak of other matters.

I believe the result would have been precisely the same if we had told her we were going to live in a balloon.

I do not know how it was, I am sure. Amenda was always most respectful in her manner. But she had a knack of making me feel, when in her presence, that Ethelbertha and I were a couple of children, playing at being grown up and married, and that she was humouring us.

Amenda stayed with us for nearly five years—until the milkman, having saved up sufficient to buy a "walk" of his own, had become practicable—but her attitude towards us never changed. Even when we came to be really important married people, the proprietors of a "family," it was evident that she only considered that we had gone a step further in the game, and were playing now at being fathers and mothers.

By some subtle process, she contrived to imbue the Baby also with this idea. The child never seemed to me to take either of us quite seriously. She would play with us, or join with us in light, frivolous conversation; but when it came to the serious affairs of life, such as bathing or feeding, she preferred her nurse.

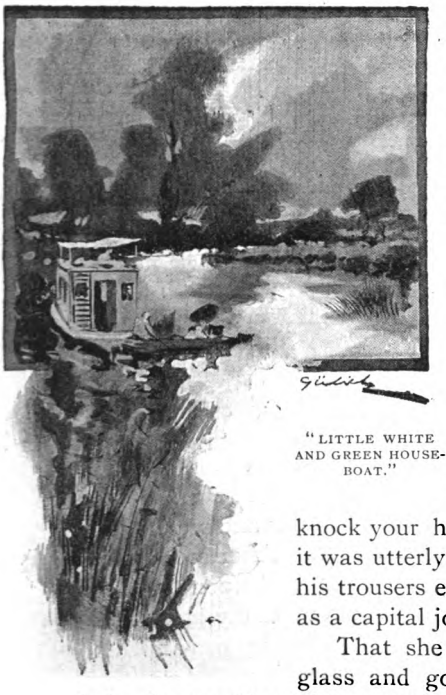
Ethelbertha attempted to take her out in the perambulator one morning, but the child would not hear of it for a moment.

"It's all right, Baby dear," explained Ethelbertha, soothingly. "Baby's going out with mumma this morning."

"Oh, no, Baby ain't," was Baby's rejoinder, in effect if not in words. "Baby don't take a hand in experiments—not this baby. I don't want to be upset or run over."

Poor Ethel! I shall never forget how heartbroken she was. It was the want of confidence that hurt her so.

But these are reminiscences of other days, having no connection with the days of which I am—or should be—writing; and to wander from one matter to another is, in a teller of tales, a grievous sin, and a growing custom much to be condemned. Therefore, I will close my eyes to all other memories, and endeavour to see only that little white and green houseboat by the ferry, which was the scene of our future collaborations.



"LITTLE WHITE AND GREEN HOUSE-BOAT."

Houseboats then were not built to the scale of Mississippi steamers, but this boat was a small one, even for that primitive age. The man from whom we hired it described it as "compact." The man to whom, at the end of the first month, we tried to sub-let it, characterised it as "poky." In our letters, we traversed this definition. In our hearts, we agreed with it.

At first, however, its size—or, rather, its lack of size—was one of its chief charms in Ethelbertha's eyes. The fact that if you rose up out of your bed carelessly you were certain to knock your head against the ceiling, and that it was utterly impossible for any man to put on his trousers except in the saloon, she regarded as a capital joke.

That she herself had to take a looking-glass and go upon the roof to do her back hair, she considered less amusing.

Amenda accepted her new surroundings with philosophic indifference. On being informed that what she had mistaken for a linen press was her bedroom, she remarked that there was one advantage about it, and that was, that she could not tumble out of bed, seeing there was nowhere to tumble; and, on being shown the kitchen, she remarked that she should like it for two things—one was that she could sit in the middle and reach everything without getting up; the other, that nobody else could come into the apartment while she was there.

"You see, Amenda," explained Ethelbertha, apologetically, "we shall really live outside."

"Yes, mum," answered Amenda, "I should say that would be the best place to do it."

If only we could have lived more outside, the life might have been pleasant enough, but the weather rendered it impossible, six days out of the seven, for us to do more than look out of the window and feel thankful that we had got a roof over our heads.

'HAD TO GO UPON THE ROOF TO DO HER BACK HAIR."

I have known wet summers before and since. I have learnt by many bitter experiences the danger and foolishness of leaving the shelter of London during any time between the first of May and the thirty-first of October. Indeed, the country is always associated in my mind with recollections of long, weary days passed in the pitiless rain, and sad, dreary evenings spent in other people's clothes. But never have I known, and never, I pray night and morning, may I know again, such a summer as the one we lived through (though none of us expected to) on that confounded houseboat.

At about five o'clock in the morning, we would be awakened by the rain's forcing its way in through the window and wetting the bed, and would get up and mop out the saloon. After breakfast, I would try to work, but the beating of the hail upon the roof just over my head would drive every idea out of my brain, and, after a wasted hour or two, I would fling down my pen and hunt up Ethelbertha, and we would put on our mackintoshes and take our umbrellas and go out for a row or a walk. At mid-day, we would return and put on some dry clothes, and sit down to dinner.

In the afternoon the storm generally freshened up a bit, and we were kept pretty busy rushing about with towels and cloths, trying to prevent the water from coming into the rooms and swamping us. During tea-time, the saloon was usually illuminated by forked lightning. The evenings we spent in baling out the boat, after which we took it in turns to go into the kitchen and warm ourselves. At eight we supped, and from then until it was time to go to bed we sat wrapped up in rugs, listening to the roaring of the thunder and the howling of the wind, and the lashing of the

waves, and wondering whether the boat would hold out through the night.

Friends would come down to spend the day with us—elderly, irritable people, fond of warmth and comfort; people who did not, as a rule, hanker after jaunts, even under the most favourable conditions; but who had been persuaded by our silly talk that a day on the river would be to them like a Saturday to Monday in Paradise. Poor creatures! They would generally return home, looking as if they had had a day *in* the river.

"OUT FOR A ROW."

They would arrive early in the morning, soaked; and we would shut them up in different bunks, and leave them to strip themselves and put on things of Ethelbertha's or of mine. But Ethel and I, in those days, were slim, so that stout, middle-aged people in our clothes neither looked well nor felt happy.

"STOUT, MIDDLE-AGED PEOPLE IN OUR CLOTHES."

Upon their emerging, we would take them into the saloon and try to entertain them by telling them what we had intended to do with them had the day been fine. But their answers were short, and occasionally snappy, and after a while the conversation would flag, and we would sit round reading last week's newspapers and coughing.

The moment their own clothes were dry (we lived in a perpetual

atmosphere of steaming clothes) they would insist upon leaving us, which seemed to me discourteous after all that we had done for them, and would dress themselves once more and start off home, and get wet again before they got there.

We would generally receive a letter a few days afterwards, written by some relative, informing us that both patients were doing as well as could be expected, and promising to send us a card for the funeral in case of a relapse.

Our chief recreation, our sole consolation, during the long weeks of our imprisonment, was to watch from our windows the pleasure-seekers passing by in their small, open boats, and to reflect what an awful day they had had, or were going to have, as the case might be.

In the morning, they would head up stream—young men with their sweethearts; nephews taking out their rich old aunts; husbands and wives (some of them pairs, some of them odd ones); stylish-looking girls with cousins; energetic-looking men with dogs; high-class silent parties; low-class noisy parties; quarrelsome family parties — boatload after boatload they went by, wet, but still hopeful, pointing out bits of blue sky to one another.

'ROWING HARD AND SINGING."

In the evening, they would return, drenched and gloomy, saying disagreeable things to one another.

That summer, I am convinced, was responsible for the breaking off of many an engagement, and the abandonment, maybe, of one or two elopements. A wet day on the river affords lovers an insight into each other's character that is not otherwise easily obtainable. Angelina learns that Edwin's language is not so limited as she had imagined, and Edwin perceives that Angelina's smile is not the fixture he had thought it.

One couple, and one couple only, out of the many hundreds that passed under our review, came back from the ordeal with pleasant faces. He was rowing hard and singing, with a handkerchief tied round his head to keep his hat on, and she was

laughing at him, while trying to hold up an umbrella with one hand and steer with the other.

There are but two explanations to account for people being jolly on the river in the rain. The one I dismissed as being both uncharitable and improbable. The other was creditable to the human race, and, adopting it, I took off my cap to this damp but cheerful pair as they went by. They answered with a wave of the hand, and I stood looking after them till they disappeared in the mist.

I am inclined to think that those young people, if they be still alive, are very happy. Maybe, fortune has been kind to them, or maybe she has not, but in either event they are, I am inclined to think, happier than are most people.

"AN OLD CORNCRAKE LIVED NEAR US."

Now and again, the daily tornado would rage with such fury as to defeat its own purpose by prematurely exhausting itself, and thus being unable, towards evening, to come up to time; and, on these rare occasions, we would sit out on the deck, and enjoy the unwonted luxury of a little fresh air.

I remember well those few pleasant evenings: the river, luminous with the drowned light, the dark banks where the night lurked, the storm-tossed sky, jewelled here and there with stars.

It was delightful not to hear for an hour or so the sullen thrashing of the rain; but to sit and listen to the leaping of the fishes, or the soft swirl raised by the water-rat, swimming stealthily among the rushes, or the restless twitterings of the few still wakeful birds.

There was an old corncrake lived near us, and the way he used to disturb all the other birds, and keep them from going to sleep, was shameful. Amenda, who was town-bred, mistook him at first for one of those cheap alarm clocks, and wondered who was winding him up, and why they went on doing it all night; and, above all, why they didn't oil him.

He would begin his unhallowed performance about dusk, just as every respectable bird was preparing to settle down for the

night. A family of thrushes had their nest a few yards from his stand, and they used to get perfectly furious with him.

"There's that fool at it again," the female thrush would say; "why can't he do it in the day-time if he must do it at all?" (She spoke, of course, in twitters, but I am confident the above is a correct translation.)

After a while, the young thrushes would wake up and begin chirping, and then the mother would get madder than ever.

"Can't you say something to him?" she would cry indignantly to her husband. "How do you think the children can get to sleep, poor things, with that hideous row going on all night? Might just as well be living in a saw-mill."

Thus adjured, the male thrush would put his head over the nest, and call out in a nervous, apologetic manner:

"I say, you know, you there, I wish you wouldn't mind being quiet a bit. My wife says she can't get the children to sleep. It's too bad, you know, 'pon my word it is."

"Gor on," the corncrake would answer, surlily. "You keep your wife herself quiet; that's enough for you to do." And on he would go again worse than before.

Then a mother blackbird, from a little further off, would join in the fray.

"Ah, it's a good hiding he wants, not a talking to. And if I was a cock, I'd give it him." (This remark would be made in a tone of withering contempt, and would appear to bear reference to some previous discussion.)

"You're quite right, ma'am," Mrs. Thrush would reply. "That's what I tell my husband, but" (with rising inflection, so that every lady in the plantation might hear) "*he* wouldn't move himself, bless you—no, not if I and the children were to die before his eyes for want of sleep."

"Ah, he ain't the only one, my dear," the blackbird would pipe back, "they're all alike." Then, in a voice more of sorrow than of anger, "But there, it ain't their fault, I suppose, poor things. If you ain't got the spirit of a bird you can't help yourself."

I would strain my ears at this point to hear if the male blackbird was moved at all by these taunts, but the only sound I could ever detect coming from his neighbourhood was that of palpably exaggerated snoring.

By this time, the whole district would be awake, expressing views concerning that corncrake that might have wounded a less callous nature.

" Blow me tight, Bill,' some vulgar little hedge-sparrow would chirp out, in the midst of the hubbub, " if I don't believe the gent thinks 'e's a-singing."

" 'Tain't 'is fault," Bill would reply, with mock sympathy. " Somebody's put a penny in the slot, and 'e can't stop 'isself."

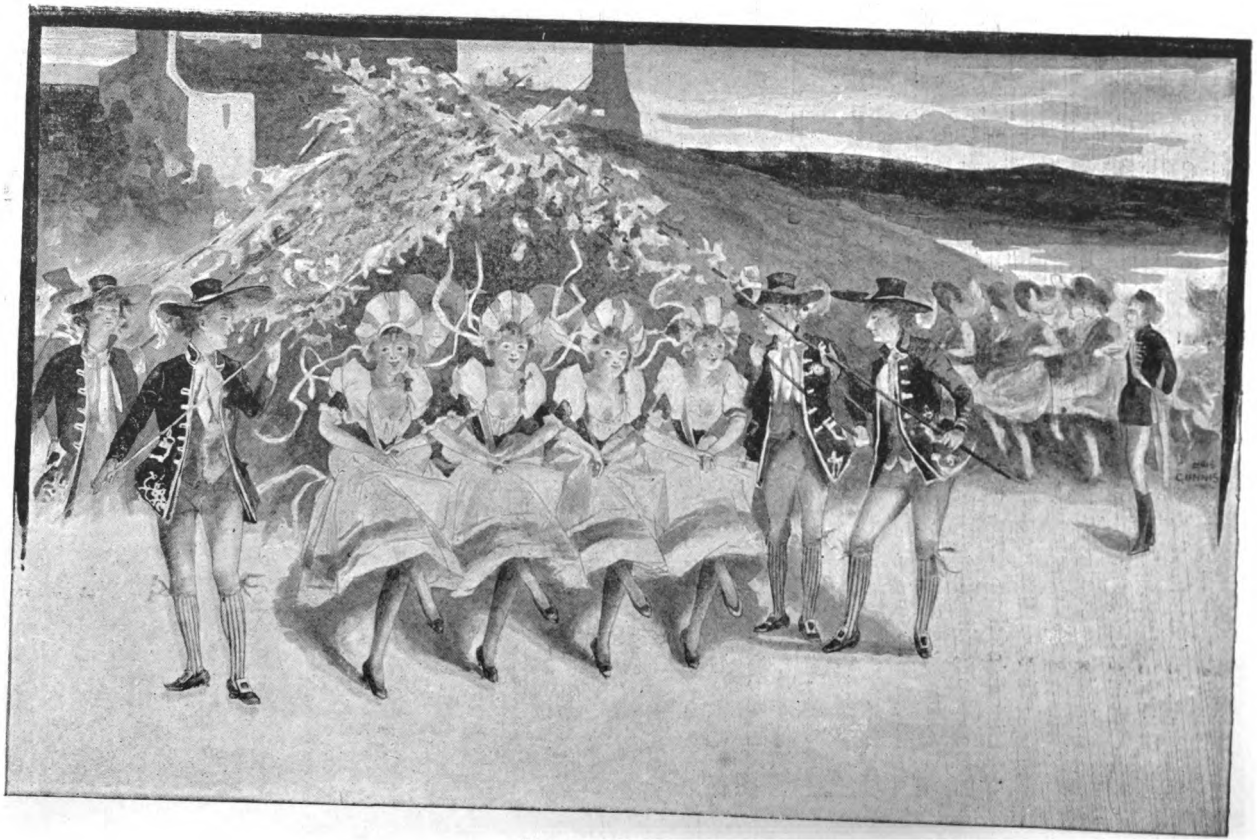
Irritated by the laugh that this would call forth from the younger birds, the corncrake would exert himself to be more objectionable than ever, and, as a means to this end, would commence giving his marvellous imitation of the sharpening of a rusty saw by a steel file.

But at this an old crow, not to be trifled with, would cry out, angrily :

" Stop that, now. If I come down to you I'll peck your cranky head off, I will."

And then would follow silence for a quarter of an hour, after which the whole thing would begin again.

(To be continued.)



THE HOP-POLE DANCE.

The Building of the Ballet.

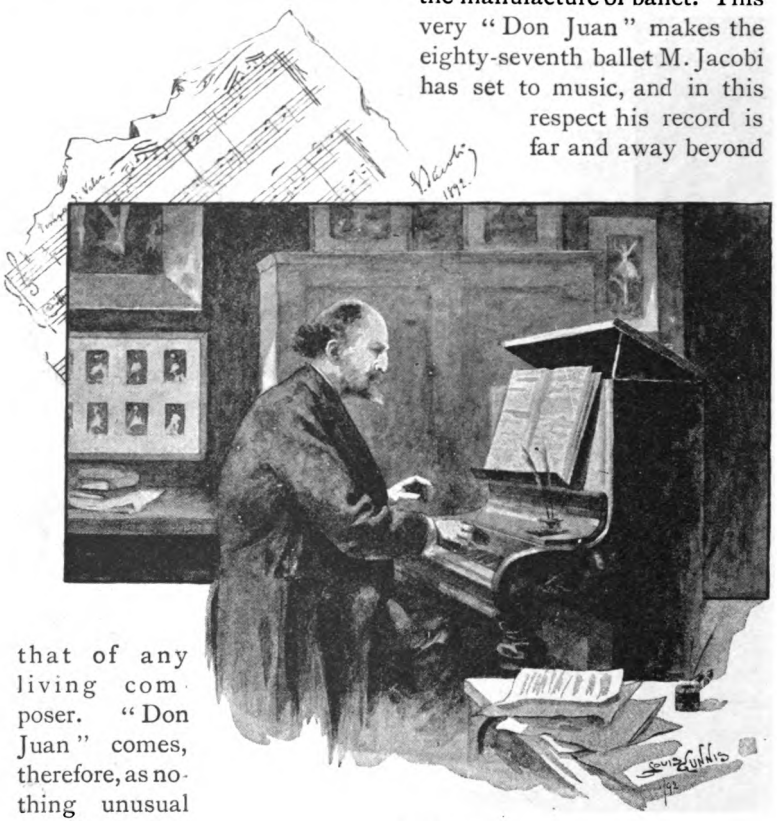
By Athol Mayhew.

Illustrated by Louis Gunnis.

A SUCCESSFUL ballet, such as the Alhambra's latest, is by no means an easy thing to produce. During its inception, it sheds an air of grave responsibility on "all concerned." Time, experience, money, and, above all, *esprit de corps* are its essential ingredients. From the instant when the new *scenario* has been accepted by the Board, and the word "go" has been officially given, a heavy burden rests upon the small army of experts engaged in the evolution of the ballet. For some days after the *scenario* has been taken in hand everybody develops a tendency to get away into dark corners and think. There is a far-off look in M. Jacobi's eyes, for on him lies the responsibility for the music. The elasticity of deportment usually observable about the region of the ballet master's back has departed for the nonce, and he seems to have become somewhat limp under the heavy burden of the many new and original dances he will be expected to invent. Even M. Alias, the costumier, lets his usually radiant features fall as he racks his brains for new and startling arrangements in frills and furbelows, or the effective disposition of sulphur yellows with pansy violets, of the harmonious possibilities of lobster red and prawn pink, or the more subtle blending of frog greens with blue-bottle tints. The property man has the weight of Don Juan's supper on his mind, with its appetising pasteboard dishes of salmon mayonnaise, boar's head galantine, and lobster salad. Much will also be expected of him in the way of *papier maché* beer-mugs, artificial hop-poles, and counterfeit casks. The stage carpenter, too, seems slightly oppressed with a sense of approaching "sets" and "strikes"; the scenic artist, Mr. Ryan, is cogitating "cloths," "profiles," "wings," and "sky borders"; whilst the machinist is in a very "grave" humour indeed concerning the "rise and sink" of the Commandant's charger, and the way

something like humorous animation is to be worked into the legs and tail of a "profile" horse.

It is, however, with M. Jacobi, the *chef d'orchestre*, and M. Coppi, the *maitre de ballet*, that thoughts first assume shape. Both of these experienced gentlemen are old and trusted hands in the manufacture of ballet. This very "Don Juan" makes the eighty-seventh ballet M. Jacobi has set to music, and in this respect his record is far and away beyond that of any living composer. "Don Juan" comes, therefore, as nothing unusual to M. Jacobi, who, during his twenty years at the Alhambra, has set every conceivable ballet subject to music. For some days past he has been in his room just off the stage at the Alhambra, with M. Coppi close by his side, taking notes in his ballet-book, as the *maestro* makes a mixture of Mozart and himself trickle from his melodious fingers over the keyboard of his piano. M. Jacobi has the reputation of being thoroughly conscientious and painstaking with his work. Often a number will be scored six or seven times



M. JACOBI.

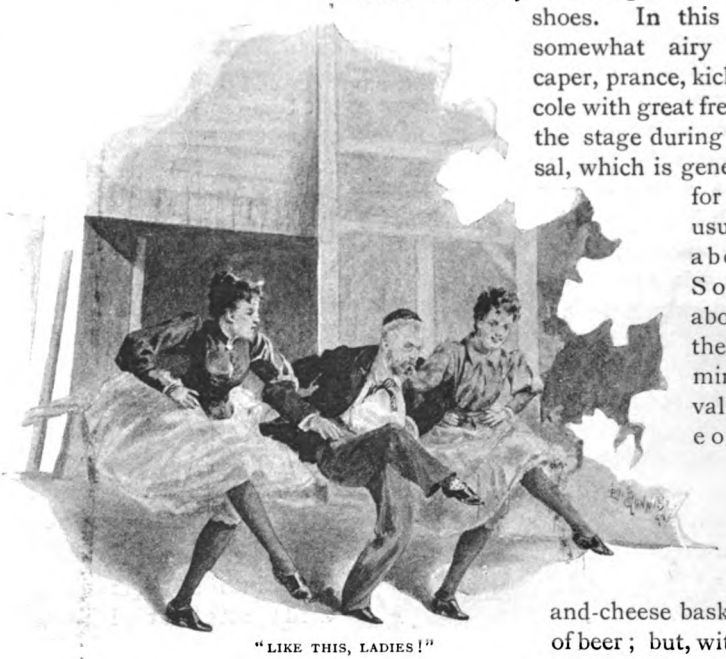
afresh before it will pass his fastidious self-review. This preliminary care is of the utmost importance to the ultimate prospects of a ballet, for let it be understood that in this form of entertainment every trip, glide, cut, or whirl has to be inspired from the conductor's desk. It is the *maitre de ballet*, and through him the *ballerina*, who are guided by his bâton. M. Coppi may have his own idea about the duration of a certain *tempo*, but it is M. Jacobi who sets the feet moving on the stage.

"A TRYING POSE."

But the way the feet shall move rests entirely with M. Coppi. When at M. Jacobi's side by the pianoforte, his head is perpetually on one side like a bird's, getting the music thoroughly into his mind. Occasionally he will jump to his feet, as an idea seizes him, and caper about the room with a grace and agility most extraordinary to behold in a middle aged gentleman of a somewhat corpulent and clerical exterior. But M. Coppi has been a dancer in his younger days, and it is astonishing to witness the grace he can infuse into a sober frock coat, top-hat, and unetherial pepper and salt combinations. When M. Jacobi's piano score is ready, the ballet goes into rehearsal.

The vast stage of the Alhambra cleared, like a ship's deck, for action, presents a striking appearance during the earlier rehearsals of a ballet. Every vestige of space is wanted. Even the fiddler and pianist, who play the music, are rigged out on a scaffolding over the orchestra. Close to the float and T lights stands M. Coppi, with his back to the great holland-shrouded house. In his hand is a long, thick pole, looking suspiciously like the better part of a broom-handle. Under his feet is a square board, much battered, splintered, and frayed in the parts where it has been thumped upon by the before-mentioned pole. Before him are a bevy of more or less fair damsels, clad in a kind of demi-toilet. These form the *corps de ballet*, some 150 in number. They are dressed very nearly all alike, in coloured Garibaldis,

white cotton petticoats, white linen "tacks" or knickerbockers, black or fancy stockings, and practising shoes. In this loose and somewhat airy garb they caper, prance, kick, and caracole with great freedom about the stage during the rehearsal, which is generally called for eleven, and usually ends about two. Somewhere about mid-day there is a ten minutes interval for luncheon, when "mother" is in great demand, with her bread-and-cheese basket and cans of beer; but, with the exception of this brief rest, it is hard work all the time, and M. Coppi works quite as hard as the ladies he is instructing. When not pounding away with his broom-handle to mark the time, he is footing it with a *ballerina* on either arm, as he illustrates a figure which has just sprung ready-made into his perspiring brain. As I have before said, the dance is suggested by the music, and both music and dance are knocked into the heads of the *corps de ballet* by the eternal thump, thump, thump of M. Coppi's broom-stick marking time. Sometimes it taps pleasantly on the board, when all is going well, to encouraging little cries of "Brava, brava!" from the *maitre*, who knows hardly any English; at others, it crashes down upon the stage to an accompaniment of strange and weird Italian imprecations—a sure sign that the back rows are getting mixed, or that the younger and less experienced girls have failed to grasp his drilling. With the *coryphées* very little trouble is necessary, but on the less efficient ladies of the corps unflagging pains and patience have to be expended.

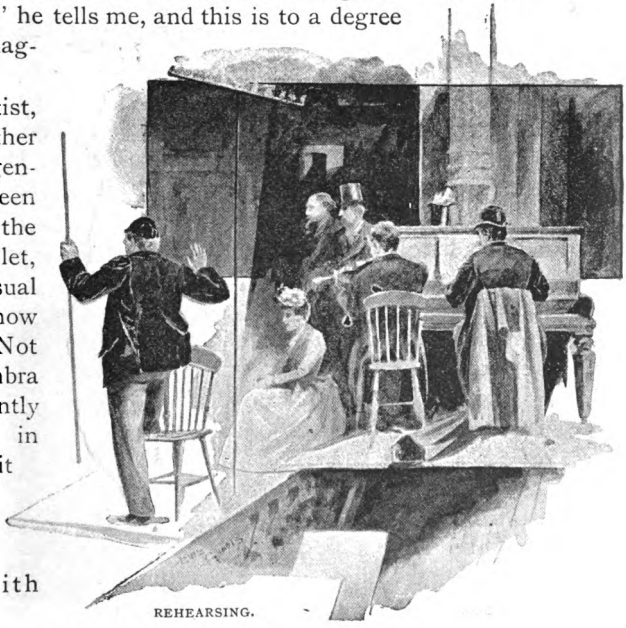


"LIKE THIS, LADIES!"

It is M. Coppi's practice to rehearse his ballet first and his principals afterwards. When the former have fully grasped the positions, evolutions, and measures of the three tableaux, then the leading characters are brought upon their various scenes. Principals and subordinates all move to time and numbers in a ballet, and love, hate, despair, revenge, spring into life and expression through the inevitable "von, doo, dree" of M. Coppi's broom-stick. How this indefatigable gentleman manages to retain all the contrivances of his head in his mind from one rehearsal to another is perhaps the greatest mystery involved in the many minor mysteries of his charming art. Yet he is never at fault, though he has nothing to guide him except the bare count of bars to a number as set down by him in his ballet-book.

Whilst all this has been taking place on the Alhambra stage, M. Jacobi has been hard at work at home scoring his music for the band. Twenty years' experience in this direction in Leicester Square has made him the best scorer of ballet music extant, for he knows to a shade the capabilities of his strings, reeds, brasses, and parchments. His musicians are seldom changed. "He does not like new faces," he tells me, and this is to a degree the secret of his magnificent orchestra.

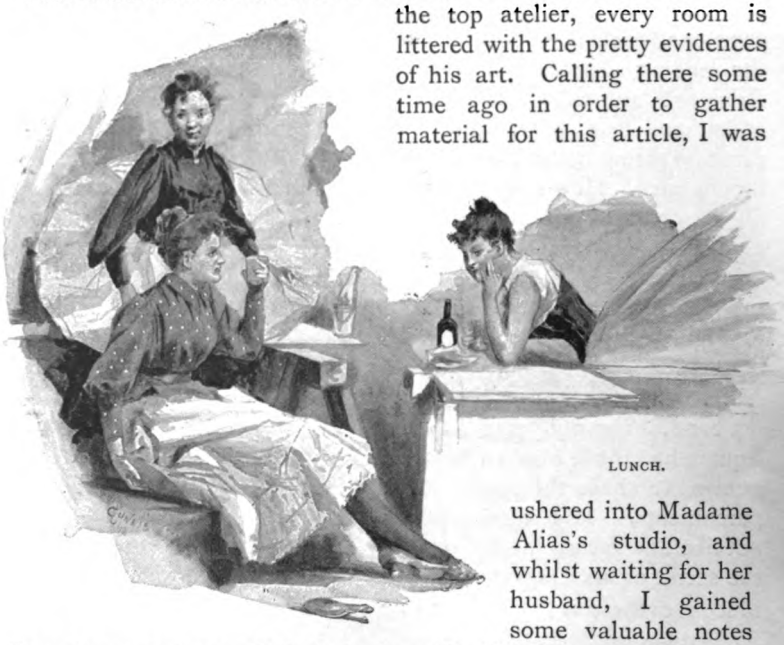
But another artist, as important as either of the foregoing gentlemen, has also been hard at work on the evolution of a ballet, though only a casual frequenter up to now of the rehearsals. Not far from the Alhambra—in fact, conveniently adjacent thereto, in Soho Square to wit—M. Alias has his abode, where, as he has been heard to sing with Thackeray—



REHEARSING.

"Away from the world and its toils and its cares,
I've a snug little kingdom up four pair of stairs."

This is the demon costumier's retreat, but from the basement to the top atelier, every room is littered with the pretty evidences of his art. Calling there some time ago in order to gather material for this article, I was

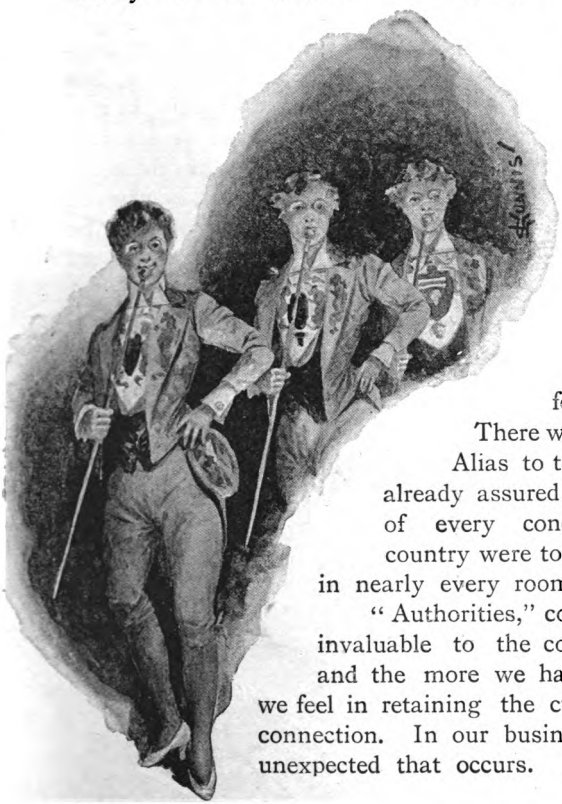


LUNCH.

ushered into Madame Alias's studio, and whilst waiting for her husband, I gained some valuable notes from the experience of Madame herself. The room in which she was seated was one such as Leigh Hunt or Charles Lamb would have revelled in, as it was crammed in all corners with prints and books, old and new, on archæology, the drama, travels, voyages, &c. A book interests in proportion as it surprises us, and as my eye alighted upon several *éditions de luxe* which peeped from under a roll of brocade, I naturally turned towards them. Madame, who evidently approved the look of admiration that came into my face, told me, in tones of pardonable pride, that her husband is the happy possessor of one of the finest libraries of costume in England, and that for many years he has been gleaning these treasured volumes till they have become part and parcel of his existence.

"MOTHER."

"He is never so happy," says Madame, "as when he is in his library. In the words of Montaigne, 'he goes here and there, culling out of several books the things that best please him,' and in a manner composing and storing up what he may soon after be able to hurry forward, for, in the matter of costume, we never know what a day may bring forth."

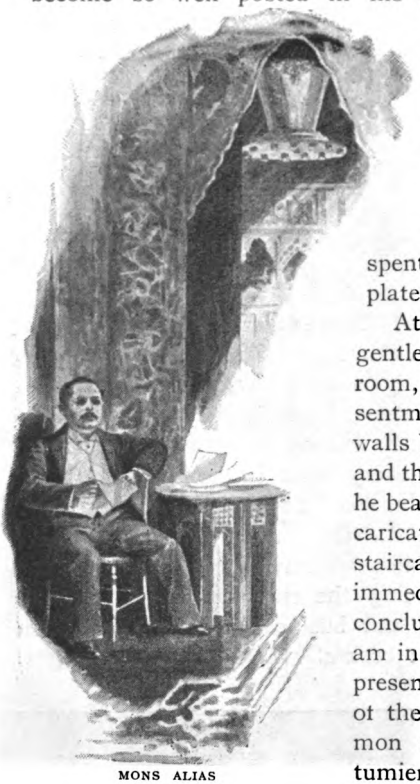


There was no need for Madame Alias to tell me that, as I had already assured myself that costumes of every conceivable period and country were to be found by the dozen in nearly every room in the house.

"Authorities," continues Madame, "are invaluable to the conscientious costumier, and the more we have of them the safer we feel in retaining the custom of our theatrical connection. In our business it is invariably the unexpected that occurs. To-morrow we might be called upon to furnish the uniforms for a battle scene of, say, Napoleon storming the Bridge at Lodi, or Wellington surveying the Towers at Salamanca, Brutus reading in his tent at Philippi,

THE DANCE OF THE POWDER-PUFFS.

or Richard bearing down with the English chivalry upon the white armies of Saladin. Where, in these exact days," exclaims Madame, "should we be then without our authorities? Besides," she continues with a laugh, "my husband, by continual reference to his catalogues, indexes, and portfolios, has become so well posted in his library that I verily believe that, if you were to ask him for any particular dress of the stone, bronze, mediæval, or renaissance periods, he would, by a sort of natural magic, be able to evolve it from his inner consciousness, just as well as if he had spent hours among his cherished plates and pages."

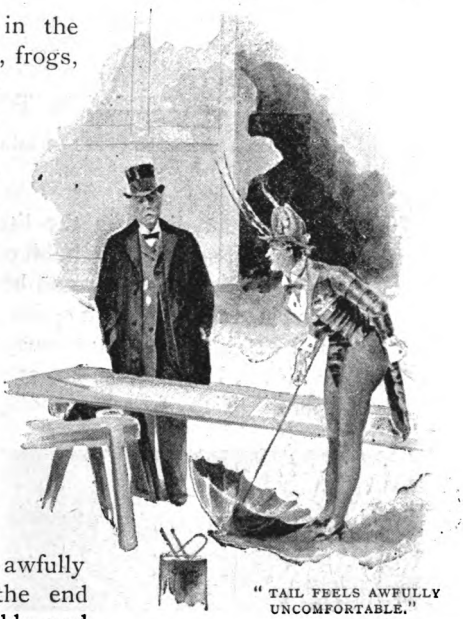


MONS ALIAS

At this juncture, a dapper little gentleman comes briskly into the room, and from the counterfeit presentment which hangs upon the walls by Sicard, and the likeness he bears to a fine caricature on the staircase, I immediately conclude I am in the presence of the demon costumier.

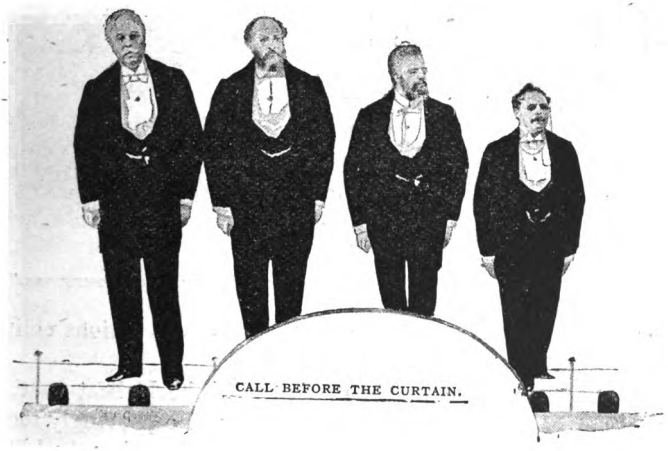
M. Alias takes me below to his Moorish room on the first floor, where his diminutive figure seems to contract under the amplitude of the surroundings, and there he talks of the coming ballet, and all the novelties and splendours with which he intends to invest "Don Juan." I learn that there are to be animated lamps in it, and a dance of

powder-puffs, and ladies in the dresses of lobsters, prawns, frogs, and blue-bottles. But anxiety is on the little gentleman's brow, for all the care and experience he is bringing to bear upon his latest ballet, as it is on the brows of all who are drawing near the conclusion of their arduous undertaking.



"TAIL FEELS AWFULLY UNCOMFORTABLE."

Apprehension reaches its highest pitch when Mr. Hollingshead is informed at the dress rehearsal by one of the lobsters that she is afraid she will have to resign, as her tail feels awfully uncomfortable. But in the end all goes well. The inevitable and dreaded Monday night arrives. From start to finish the new ballet goes with a bang, and in the end there is an enthusiastic



CALL BEFORE THE CURTAIN.

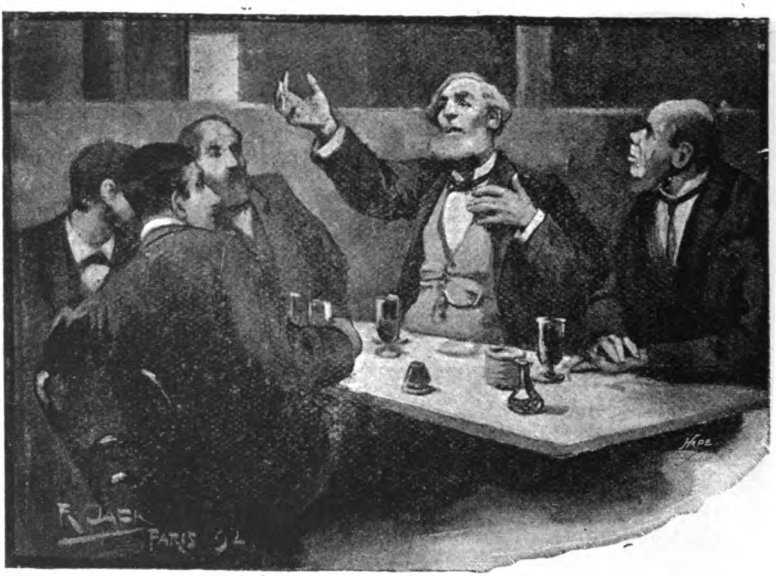
Told by the Colonel.

IV.

THOMPSON'S TOMBSTONE.

By W. L. Alden. Illustrated by Richard Jack.

WE had just dined in the little Parisian restaurant where Americans are in the habit of going in order to obtain those truly French delicacies, pork and beans, buckwheat cakes, corned beef, apple pie, and overgrown oysters. I knew a man from Chicago who dined at this restaurant every day during the entire month spent by him in Paris, and who, at the end of that time, said that he was heartily sick of French cookery. Thus does the profound



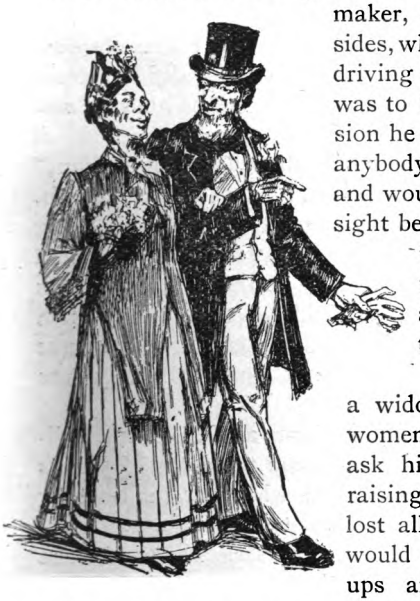
"HE WAS MAKING MORE TROUBLE THAN THOMPSON'S TOMBSTONE."

study of the manners and customs of foreign nations enlighten the mind and ripen the judgment.

The Colonel had finished his twelfth buckwheat cake, and had lighted his cigar, when he casually and reprovingly remarked to young Lathrop, who, on principle, was disputing the bill with the waiter, that "he was making more trouble than Thompson's

tombstone." Being called upon to explain this dark saying, he stretched his legs to their limit, tipped back his chair, knocked the ashes of his cigar among the remnants of his pork and beans, and launched into his story.

In the town where I was raised—and I'm not going to give away the name of it at present—there were two brothers, James and John Thompson. They were twins, and about forty years old, as I should judge. James was a bachelor, and John he was a widower, and they were both pretty well to do in the world, for those times at least. John was a farmer, and James was a waggon maker, and owned the village hearse besides, which he let out for funerals, generally driving it himself, so that any profit that was to be made out of a melancholy occasion he could make without sharing it with anybody. Both the men were close-fisted, and would look at a dollar until their eyesight began to fail before they could bring themselves to spend it. It was this miserly spirit that brought about the trouble that I'm going to tell you about.



"MARRIES MARIA SLOCUM."

After John Thompson had been a widower so long that the unmarried women had given up calling on him to ask his advice about the best way of raising money for the heathen, and had lost all expectation that any one of them would ever gather him in, he suddenly ups and marries Maria Slocum, who used to keep a candy store next door to the schoolhouse, and had been a confirmed old maid for twenty years. She had a little money though, and folks did say that she could have married James Thompson if she had been willing to take the risk, but the fact that James always had the hearse standing in his carriage house made him unpopular with the ladies. She took John because his views on infant baptism agreed with hers, and he took her because she had a good reputation for making pies, and was economical and religious.

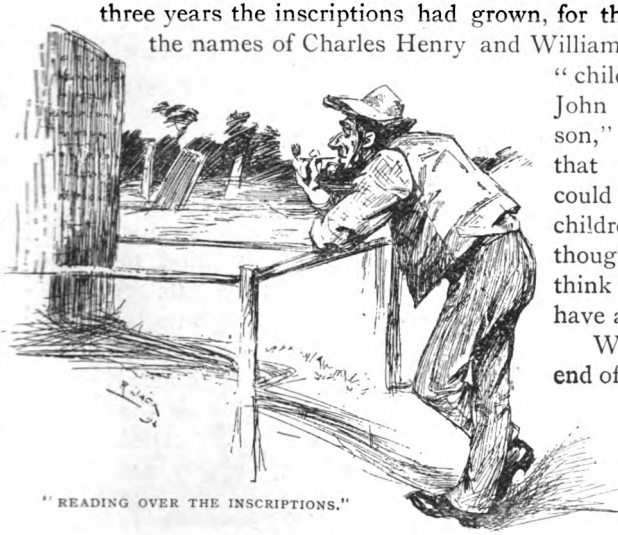
The Thompson brothers owned burial lots in the new cemetery that were close together. James, of course, had, so far,

no use for his lot, but John had begun to settle his by burying his first wife in about the middle of it. The lot was a good-sized one, with accommodation for a reasonably large family without crowding them, and without, at the same time, scattering them in any unsocial way. I don't know how it came about, but no sooner was John married than he took a notion to put up a tombstone over his first wife. He thought that as he was going to incur such an expense, he would manage it so that he wouldn't have to incur it again; and so he got up a design for a combination family tombstone, and had it made, and carved, and lettered, and set up in his burial lot.

Near the top of the stone was John Thompson's name, the date of his birth, and a blank space for the date of his death. Next came the name of "Sarah Jane, beloved wife of the above," and the date of her birth and death. Then came the name of "Maria, beloved and lamented wife of the above John Thompson," with the date of her birth and a space for the date of her death. You see, John worked in this little compliment about Maria being "lamented" so as to reconcile her to having the date of her birth given away to the public. The lower half of the tombstone was left vacant so as to throw in a few children, should any such contingency arise, and the whole advertisement ended with a verse of a hymn setting forth that the entire Thompson family was united in a better land above.

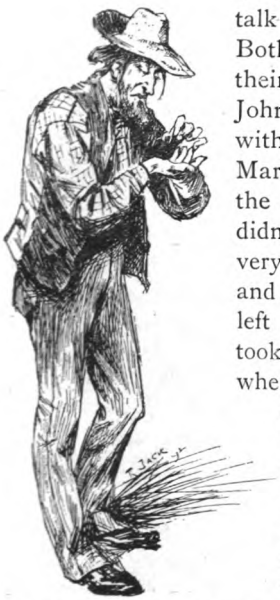
The cost of the affair was about the same as that of one ordinary tombstone, the maker agreeing to enter the dates of John's death and of his wife's death free of charge whenever the time for so doing might arrive; and also agreeing to enter the names of any children that might appear at a very low rate. The tombstone attracted a great deal of attention, and the summer visitors from the city never failed to go and see it. John was proud of his stroke of economy, and used to say that he wasn't in danger of being bankrupted by any epidemic, as those people were who held that every person must have his separate tombstone. Everybody admitted that the Thompson tombstone gave more general amusement to the public than any other tombstone in the whole cemetery. Every summer night John used to walk over to his lot and smoke his pipe, leaning on the fence, and reading over the inscriptions. And then he would go and take a fresh look at the Rogers's lot, where there were nine different tombstones, and chuckle to think how much they must have cost old man Rogers, who had never thought of a combination family tomb. In the course of about

three years the inscriptions had grown, for there had been added the names of Charles Henry and William Everett Thompson, "children of the above John and Maria Thompson," and John calculated that with squeezing he could enter four more children on the same stone, though he didn't really think that he would ever have any call so to do.



"READING OVER THE INSCRIPTIONS."

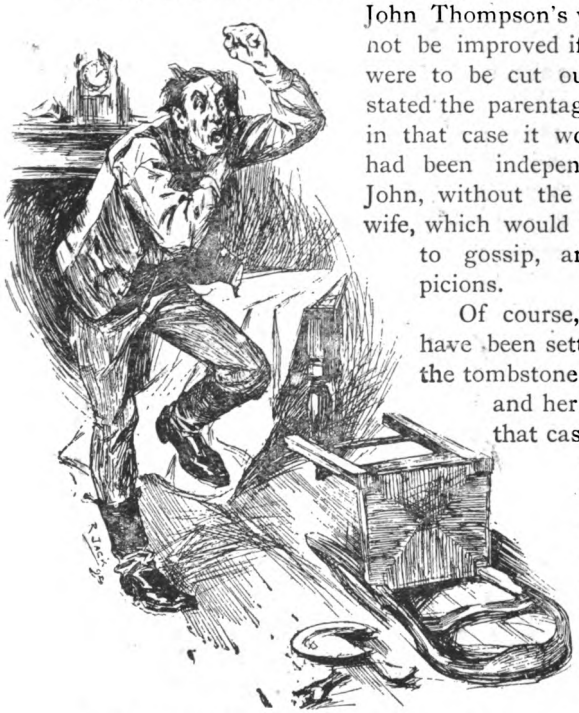
Well, a little after the end of the third year John's troubles began. He took up with Second Advent notions, and believed that the end of the world would arrive as per schedule on the 21st of November, at 8.30 a.m. Maria said that this was not orthodox, and that she wouldn't allow any such talk around her house. Both of them were set in their ways, and what with John expressing his views with his whip handle, and Maria expressing hers with the rolling-pin, they didn't seem to get on very well together, and one day Maria left the house and took the train to Chicago, where she got a divorce, and came back a free and independent woman. That wasn't all. James Thompson now saw his chance. He offered to sell out the hearse business, and after waiting ten months, so as to give no opportunity for scandal, Maria married him.



"JOHN'S TROUBLES BEGAN."

"EXPRESSING HERS WITH THE ROLLING-PIN."

John didn't seem to mind the loss of his wife very much until it happened to occur to him that his combination family tombstone would have to be altered, now that Maria was not his wife any longer. He was a truthful man, and he felt that he couldn't sleep in peace under a tombstone that was constantly telling such a thumping lie as that Maria was resting in the same burying lot, and that she was his beloved wife, when, in point of fact, she was another man's wife, and would be, at the proper time, lying in that other man's part of the cemetery. So he made up his mind to have the marble-cutter chisel out Maria's name, and the date of her birth. But before this was done he saw that it wouldn't be the square thing so far as Charles Henry and William Everett were concerned. It would be playing it low down on those helpless children to allow that tombstone to assert that they were the children of John Thompson and some unspecified woman called Maria, who, whatever else she may have been, was certainly not John Thompson's wife. Matters would not be improved if the name of Maria were to be cut out of the line which stated the parentage of the children, for in that case it would appear that they had been independently developed by John, without the intervention of any wife, which would be sure to give rise to gossip, and all sorts of suspicions.

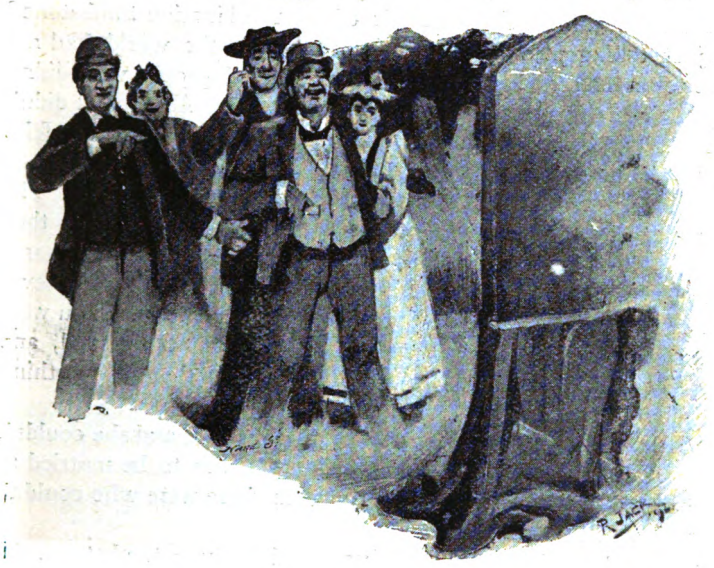


"DIDN'T SEEM TO GET ON VERY WELL TOGETHER."

Of course, the difficulty could have been settled by erasing from the tombstone all reference to Maria and her two children, but in that case a separate stone for the children would some day become necessary, and, what was of more consequence, John's grand idea of a combination tombstone would have to be completely abandoned. John was not a hasty man, and, after thinking the matter over until the mental struggle turned his

hair grey, he decided to compromise the matter by putting a sort of petticoat around the lower half of the tombstone, which would hide all reference to Maria and the children. This was easily done with the aid of an old pillow-case, and the tombstone became more an object of interest to the public than ever, while John, so to speak, sat down to wait for better times.

Now James had been thinking over the tombstone problem, and fancied that he had found a solution of it that would put money in his own pocket and at the same time satisfy his brother. He proposed to John that the inscription should be altered so as to read: "Maria, formerly wife of John, and afterwards of James



"THE TOMBSTONE BECAME MORE AN OBJECT OF INTEREST TO THE PUBLIC THAN EVER."

Thompson," and that a hand should be carved on the stone with an index finger pointing towards James's lot, and a line in small type saying, "See small tombstone." James said that he would pay the cost of putting up a small uninscribed stone in his own lot, over the remains of Maria—waiting, of course, until she should come to be remains—and that John could pay the cost of altering the inscriptions on the large stone. The two brothers discussed this scheme for months, each of them being secretly satisfied with it, but John maintaining that James should pay all the expenses.

This James would not do, for he reasoned that unless John

came to his terms the combination tombstone would be of no good to anybody, and that if he remained firm, John would come round to his proposal in time.

There isn't the least doubt that this would have been the end of the affair, if it had not been that James chuckled over it so much that one day he chuckled a fishbone into his throat, and choked to death on the spot. He was buried in his own lot, with nothing but a wooden headboard to mark the spot. His widow said that if he had been anxious to have a swell marble monument he would have made provision for it in his lifetime, and as he had done nothing of the kind, she could not see that she had any call to waste her money on worldly vanities.

How did this settle the affair of the combination tombstone? I'm just telling you. You see by this time the world had not come to an end, and John, who always hated people who didn't keep their engagements, seeing that the Second Adventists didn't keep theirs, left them, and returned to the regular Baptist fold. When his brother died he went to the funeral, and did what little he could, in an inexpensive way, to comfort the widow. The long and short of it was that they became as friendly as they ever had been, and John finally proposed that Maria should marry him again. "You know, Maria," he said, "that we never disagreed, except about that Second Advent nonsense. You were right about that, and I was wrong, as the event has proved, and now that we're agreed once more I don't see as there is anything to hinder our getting married again."

Maria said that she had a comfortable support, and she couldn't feel that it was the will of Providence for her to be married so often, considering how many poor women there were who couldn't get a single husband.

"Well," continued John, "there is that there tombstone. It always pleased you, and I was always proud of it. If we don't get married again that tombstone is as good as thrown away, and it seems unchristian to throw away a matter of seventy-five dollars, when the whole thing could be arranged so easy."

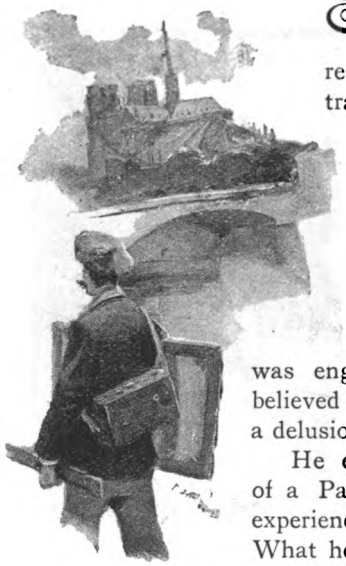
The argument was one which Maria felt that she could not resist, and so, after she had mourned James Thompson for a fitting period, she married John a second time, and the tombstone's reputation for veracity was restored. John and Maria often discussed the feasibility of selling James's lot, and burying him where the combination tombstone would take him in, but there was no more room for fresh inscriptions, and besides, John didn't see his

way clear to stating in a short and impressive way the facts as to the relationship between James and Maria. So on the whole he judged it best to let James sleep in his own lot, and let the combination tombstone testify only to the virtues of John Thompson and his family. That's the story of Thompson's tombstone, and if you don't believe it I can show you a photograph of the stone with all the inscriptions. I've got it in my trunk at this very moment, and when we go back to the hotel, if you remind me of it, I'll get it out.

The Sixth Bench.

By Robert Barr.

Illustrated by Richard Jack.



SHE was in earnest; he was not. When that state of things exists anything may happen. The occurrence may be commonplace, comic, or tragic, depending on the temperament and experience of the woman. In this instance the result was merely an appointment—which both of them kept.

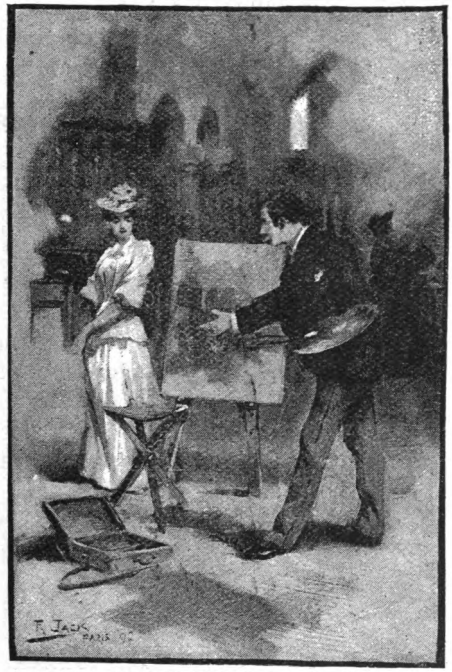
Hector McLane came to Paris with noble resolutions, a theory of colour, and a small allowance. Paris played havoc with all of these. He was engaged to a nice girl at home, who believed him destined to become a great painter; a delusion which McLane shared.

He entered with great zest into the life of a Parisian art student, but somehow the experience did not equal his anticipations. What he had read in books—poetry and prose—had thrown a halo around the Latin Quarter, and he was therefore disappointed in finding the halo missing. The romance was sordid and mercenary, and after a few months of it he yearned for something better.

In Paris you may have nearly everything—except the something better. It exists, of course, but it rarely falls in the way of the usually impecunious art student. Yet it happened that, as luck was not against the young man, he found it when he had abandoned the search for it.

McLane's theory was that art had become too sombre. The world was running over-much after the subdued in colour. He wanted to be able to paint things as they are; and was

not to be deterred if his pictures were called gaudy. He obtained permission to set up his easel in the Church of Notre Dame, and in the dim light there, he endeavoured to place on canvas some semblance of the splendour of colour that came through the huge rose window high above him. He was discouraged to see how opaque the colours in the canvas were as compared with the translucent hues of the great window. As he leaned back with a sigh of defeat, his wandering eyes met, for one brief instant, something more beautiful than the stained glass, as the handiwork of God must always be more beautiful than the handiwork of man. The fleeting glimpse was of a melting pair of dark limpid eyes, which, meeting his, were instantly veiled, and then he had a longer view of the sweet face they belonged to. It was evident that the young girl had been admiring his work, which was more than he could hope to have the professor at Julien's do.



'ASKED HER IF SHE WOULD NOT SIT DOWN.

Lack of assurance was never considered, even by his dearest friend, to be among McLane's failings. He rose from his painting stool, bowed, and asked her if she would not sit down for a moment; she could see the—the—painting so much better. The girl did not answer, but turned a frightened look upon him, and fled under the wing of her kneeling duenna, who had not yet finished her devotions. It was evident that the prayers of the girl had been briefer than those of the old woman in whose charge she was. Where the need is greatest the prayer is often the shortest. McLane had one more transitory glimpse of those dark eyes as he held open the swinging door. The unconscious woman and the conscious girl passed out of the church.

This was how it began.

The painting of the coloured window of Notre Dame now occupied almost all the time at the disposal of Hector McLane. No great work is ever accomplished without unwearied perseverance. It was remarkable that the realisation of this truth came upon him just after he had definitely made up his mind to abandon the task. Before he allowed the swinging door to close he had resolved to pursue his study in colour. It thus happened, incidentally, that he saw the young girl again and again, always at the same hour, and always with the same companion. Once he succeeded, unnoticed by the elder, in slipping a note into her hand, which he was pleased and flattered to see she retained and concealed. Another day he had the joy of having a few whispered words with her in the dim shadow of one of the gigantic pillars. After that, progress was comparatively easy.

Her name was Yvette, he learned, and he was amused to find with what expert dexterity a perfectly guileless and innocent little creature such as she was managed to elude the vigilance of the aged and experienced woman who had her in charge. The stolen interviews usually took place in the little park behind Notre Dame. There they sat on the bench facing the fountain, or walked up and down on the crunching gravel under the trees. In the afternoons they walked in the secluded part of the park, in the shadow of the great church. It was her custom to send him dainty little notes telling him when she expected to be in the park, giving the number of the bench, for sometimes the duenna could not be eluded, and was seated there with Yvette. On these occasions McLane had to content himself with gazing from afar.

She was so much in earnest that the particular emotion which occupied the place of conscience in McLane's being was troubled. He thought of the nice girl at home, and fervently hoped nothing of this would ever reach her ears. No matter how careful a man is, chance sometimes plays him a scurvy trick. McLane remembered instances, and regretted the world was so small. Sometimes a cry

of recognition from one on the pavement to a comrade in the park, shouted through the iron railings, sent a shiver through McLane. Art students had an uncomfortable habit of roaming everywhere, and they were boisterous in hailing an acquaintance. Besides, they talked, and McLane dreaded having his little intrigue the joke of the school. At any moment an objectionable art student might drop into the park to sketch the fountain, or the nurses and children, or the back of the cathedral at one end of the park, or even the low, gloomy, unimposing front of the Morgue at the other.

He was an easy-going young fellow, who hated trouble, and perhaps, knowing that the inevitable day of reckoning was

"ON THE BENCH FACING THE FOUNTAIN."

approaching, this accounted for the somewhat tardy awakening of his conscience.

He sometimes thought it would be best simply to leave Paris without any explanation, but he remembered that she knew his address, having written to him often, and that by going to the school she could easily find out where his home was. So if there was to be a scene it was much better that it should take place in Paris, rather than where the nice girl lived.

He nerved himself up many times to make the explanation and bring down the avalanche, but when the time came he postponed it. But the inevitable ultimately arrives. He had some difficulty

at first in getting her to understand the situation clearly, but when he at last succeeded there was no demonstration. She merely kept her eyes fixed on the gravel and gently withdrew her hand from his. To his surprise she did not cry, nor even answer him, but walked silently to and fro with downcast eyes in the shadow of the church. No one, he said, would ever occupy the place in his heart that she held. He was engaged to the other girl, but he had not known what love was until he met Yvette. He was bound to the other girl by ties he could not break, which was quite true, because the nice girl had a rich father. He drew such a pathetic picture of the loveless life he must in the future lead, that a great wave of self-pity surged up within him and his voice quavered. He felt almost resentful that she should take the separation in such an unemotional manner. When a man gets what he most desires he is still unsatisfied. This was exactly the way he had hoped she would take it.

All things come to an end, even explanations.

"Well, good-bye, Yvette," he said, reaching out his hand. She hesitated an instant, then, without looking up, placed her small palm in his.

They stood thus for a moment under the trees, while the fountain beside them plashed and trickled musically. The shadow of the church was slowly creeping towards them over the gravel. The park was deserted, except by themselves. She tried gently to withdraw her hand, which he retained.

"GOOD-BYE."

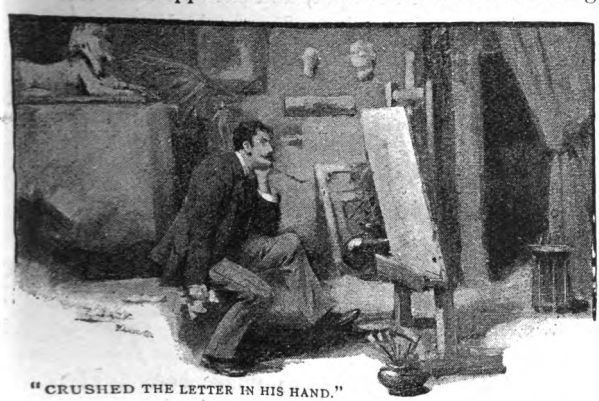
"Have you nothing to say to me, Yvette?" he asked, with a touch of reproach in his voice.

She did not answer. He held her fingers, which were slipping from his grasp, and the shadow touched her feet.

"Yvette, you will at least kiss me good-bye?"

She quickly withdrew her hand from his, shook her head and turned away. He watched her until she was out of sight, and then walked slowly towards his rooms on the Boulevard St. Germain. His thoughts were not comfortable. He was disappointed in Yvette. She was so clever, so witty, that he had at least expected she would have said something cutting, which he felt he thoroughly deserved. He had no idea she could be so heartless. Then his thoughts turned to the nice girl at home. She, too, had elements in her character that were somewhat bewildering to an honest young man. Her letters for a long time had been infrequent and unsatisfactory. It couldn't be possible that she had heard anything. Still, there is nothing so easy as point-blank denial, and he would see to that when he reached home.

An explanation awaited him at his rooms on the Boulevard. There was a foreign stamp on the envelope, and it was from the nice girl. There had been a mistake, she wrote, but happily she had discovered it before it was too late. She bitterly reproached herself, taking three pages to do it in, and on the fourth page he gathered that she would be married by the time he had the letter. There appeared to be no doubt that the nice girl fully realised how basely she had treated a talented, hard-working, aspiring, sterling young man, but the realisation had not seemingly postponed the ringing of the wedding-bells to any appreciable extent.



"CRUSHED THE LETTER IN HIS HAND."

Young McLane crushed the letter in his hand and used strong language, as, indeed, he was perfectly justified in doing. He laughed a hard, dry laugh at the perfidy of woman.

Then his thoughts turned towards Yvette. What a pity it was she was not rich! Like so many other noble, talented men, he realised he could not marry a poor woman. Suddenly it occurred to him that Yvette might not be poor. The more he pondered over the matter the more astonished he was that he had ever taken her poverty for granted. She dressed richly, and that cost money in Paris. He remembered that she wore a watch which flashed with jewels on the one occasion when he had seen it for a moment. He wished he had postponed his explanation for one more day; still that was something easily remedied. He would tell her he had thrown over the other girl for her sake. Like a pang there came to him the remembrance that he did not know her address, nor even her family name. Still she would be sure to visit the little park, and he would haunt it until she came. The haunting would give additional point to his story of consuming love. Anyhow, nothing could be done that night.

In the morning he was overjoyed to receive a letter from Yvette, and he was more than pleased when he read its contents. It asked for one more meeting behind the church.

"I could not tell you to-day," she wrote, "all I felt. To-morrow you shall know if you meet me. Do not fear that I will reproach you. You will receive this letter in the morning. At twelve o'clock I shall be waiting for you on the sixth bench on the row south of the fountain—the sixth bench—the farthest from the church. "YVETTE."

McLane was overjoyed at his good luck. He felt that he hardly merited it. He was early at the spot, and sat down on the last bench of the row facing the fountain. Yvette had not yet arrived, but it was still half an hour before the time. McLane read the morning paper and waited. At last the bells all around him chimed the hour of twelve. She had not come. This was unusual, but always possible. She might not have succeeded in getting away. The quarter and then the half hour passed before McLane began to suspect that he had been made the victim of a practical joke. He dismissed the thought; such a thing was so unlike her. He walked around the little park, hoping he had mistaken the row of benches. She was not there. He read the letter again. It was plain enough—the sixth bench. He counted the benches,

"'THAT IS THE BENCH, SIR.'"

beginning at the church. One—two—three—four—five. There were only five benches in the row.

As he gazed stupidly at the fifth bench a man beside him said—

"That is the bench, sir."

"What do you mean?" cried McLane, turning toward him, astonished at the remark.

"It was there that the young girl was found dead this morning—poisoned they say."

McLane stared at him—and then he said huskily—

"Who—who was she?"

"Nobody knows that—yet. We will soon know, for everybody, as you see, is going into the Morgue. She's the only one on the bench to-day. Better go before the crowd gets greater. I have been twice."

McLane sank on the seat and drew his hand across his forehead.

He knew she was waiting for him on the sixth bench—the furthest from the church!

The American Claimant.

By MARK TWAIN.

Illustrated by Hal Hurst.

CHAPTER XIII.

TRACY went to bed happy and awoke refreshed, and eager for his cablegram. He had been born an aristocrat, he had been a democrat for a time, he was now an aristocrat again. His bearing had stiffened overnight, and his chin had lifted itself a shade. Arrived in the basement, he was about to enter the breakfast-room when he saw old Marsh in the dim light of a corner of the hall, beckoning him with his finger to approach. The blood welled slowly up in Tracy's cheek, and he said, with a grade of injured dignity almost ducal:

"BECKONING HIM.

"Is that for me?"

"Yes."

"What is the purpose of it?"

"I want to speak to you—in private."

"This spot is private enough for me."

Marsh was surprised, and not particularly pleased. He said:

"Oh, in public, then, if you prefer. Though it hasn't been my way."

The boarders gathered to the spot, interested.

"Speak out," said Tracy. "What is it you want?"

"Well, haven't you—er—forgot something?"

"I? I'm not aware of it."

"Oh, you're not? Now, you stop and think a minute."

"I refuse to stop and think. It doesn't interest me. If it interests you, speak out."

"Well, then," said Marsh, raising his voice to a slightly angry

pitch, "you forgot to pay your board yesterday—if you're *bound* to have it public."

Oh, yes, this heir to an annual million or so had been dreaming and soaring, and had forgotten that pitiful three or four dollars. For penalty he must have it coarsely flung in his face in the presence of these people—people in whose countenances was already beginning to dawn an uncharitable enjoyment of the situation.

"Is *that* all? Take your money, and give your terrors a rest."

Tracy's hand went down into his pocket with angry decision. But it didn't come out. The color began to ebb out of his face. The countenances about him showed a growing interest; and some of them a heightened satisfaction. There was an uncomfortable pause—then he forced out, with difficulty, the words:

"I've been robbed."

Old Marsh's eyes flamed up with Spanish fire, and he exclaimed:

"Robbed, is it? *That's* your tune? It's too old—been played in this house too often; everybody plays it that can't get work when he wants it, and won't work when he can get it. Trot out Mr. Allen, somebody, and let *him* take a toot at it. It's *his* turn next, *he* forgot, too, last night. I'm laying for him."

"CAME SCRAMBLING DOWNSTAIRS."

One of the negro women came scrambling downstairs as pale as a sorrel horse with consternation and excitement.

"Misto Marsh, Misto Allen's skipped out."

"What?"

"Yes, sah, an' cleaned out his room clean! tuck bofe towels en de soap."

"You lie, you hussy."

"It's jes' so, jes' so I tells you—en Misto Sumner's socks is gone, en Misto Naylor's yuther shirt."

Mr. Marsh was at boiling point by this time. He turned upon Tracy:

"Answer up now—when are you going to settle?"

"To-day, since you seem to be in a hurry."

"To-day, is it? Sunday—and you out of work? I like that. Come—where are you going to get the money?"

Tracy's spirit was rising again. He proposed to impress these people:

"I am expecting a cablegram from home."

Old Marsh was caught out, with the surprise of it. The idea was so immense, so extravagant, that he couldn't get his breath at first. When he did get it, it came rancid with sarcasm.

"A *cablegram*. He's expecting a cablegram—this duffer, this scrub, this bilk. From his father—eh? A dollar or two a word; oh, that's nothing; *they* don't mind a little thing like that, *this* kind's father don't. Now his father is—er—well, I reckon his father——"

"My father is an English earl."

The crowd fell back aghast at the sublimity of the young loafer's "cheek." Then they burst into a laugh that made the windows rattle. Tracy was too angry to realize that he had done a foolish thing. He said:

"Stand aside, please. I——"

"Wait a minute, your lordship," said Marsh, bowing low; "where is your lordship going?"

"For the cablegram. Let me pass."

"Excuse me, your lordship, you'll stay right where you are."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean that I didn't begin to keep boarding house yesterday. It means that you can't skip out on any such——"

Tracy made a step toward the old man, but Mrs. Marsh sprang between, and said:

"MRS. MARSH SPRANG BETWEEN."

"Don't, Mr. Tracy, please." She turned to her husband and said, "*Do* bridle your tongue. What has he done to be treated so? Can't you *see* he has lost his mind with trouble and distress."

"Thank your kind heart, madam, but I've not lost my mind; and if I can have the mere privilege of stepping to the telegraph office——"

"Well, you can't," cried Marsh.

"——or sending——"

"Sending. That beats everything. If there's anybody that's fool enough to go on such a chuckle-headed errand——"

"Here comes Mr. Barrow—he will go for me. Barrow——"

A brisk fire of exclamation broke out:

"Say, Barrow, he's expecting a cablegram."

"Cablegram from his father, you know."

"Yes—cablegram from the wax-figger."

"And say, Barrow, this fellow's an earl—take off your hat, pull down your vest."

"Yes, he's come off and forgot his crown, that he wears Sundays. He's cabled over to his pappy to send it."

"OFFERING GENTLE AND KINDLY PERSUASIONS."

"Oh, stop," cried Barrow; "give the man a chance." He turned, and said with some severity, "Tracy, what's the matter with you? What kind of foolishness is this you've been talking? You ought to have more sense."

"I've not been talking foolishness; and if you'll go to the telegraph office——"

"Oh, don't talk so. I'm your friend in trouble and out of it, before your face and behind your back, for anything in *reason;* but you've lost your head, you see, and this moonshine about a cablegram——"

"I'll go there and ask for it."

"Thank you from the bottom of my heart, Brady. Here, I'll give you a written order for it. Fly, now, and fetch it. We'll soor see."

Brady flew. Immediately the sort of quiet began to steal over the crowd which means dawning doubt, misgiving; and might be translated into the words, "Maybe he *is* expecting a cablegram; maybe he *has* got a father somewhere; maybe we've been just a little too fresh, just a shade too 'previous.'" The crowd beg n

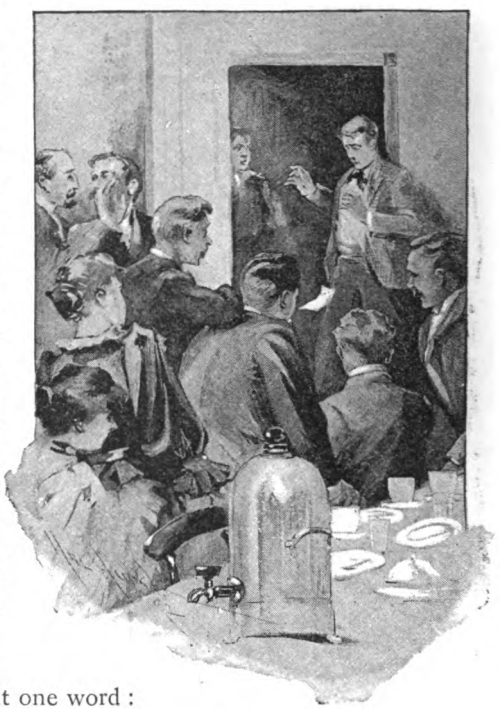
to crumble apart. By ones and twos the fragments drifted to the breakfast table. Barrow tried to bring Tracy in; but he said:

"Not yet, Barrow, presently."

Mrs. Marsh and Hattie tried, offering gentle and kindly persuasions; but he said:

"I would rather wait—till he comes."

Even old Marsh began to have suspicions that maybe he had been a trifle too "brash," as he called it, in the privacy of his soul, and he pulled himself together and started towards Tracy with invitation in his eye; but Tracy warned him off with a gesture which was quite positive and eloquent. Then followed the stillest quarter of an hour which had ever been known in that house at that time of day. It was so still, and so solemn withal, that when somebody's cup slipped from his fingers and landed in his plate the shock made people start, and the sharp sound seemed as indecorous there and as out of place as if a coffin and mourners were imminent. And at last, when Brady's feet came clattering down the stairs, the sacrilege seemed unbearable. Everybody rose softly and turned toward the door, where stood Tracy. While they gazed, young Brady arrived, panting, and put into Tracy's hand—sure enough—an envelope. Tracy fastened a bland, victorious eye upon the gazers, and kept it there till one by one they dropped their eyes, vanquished and embarrassed. Then he tore open the telegram and glanced at its message. The yellow paper fell from his fingers and fluttered to the floor, and his face turned white. There was nothing there but one word:



"THE YELLOW PAPER FELL FROM HIS FINGERS."

"*Thanks.*"

The humorist of the house, the tall,

raw-boned Billy Nash, caulker from the navy yard, was standing in the rear of the crowd. In the midst of the silence he began to whimper, then he put his handkerchief to his eyes, and burying his face in the neck of the bashfulest young fellow in the company, a navy-yard blacksmith, shrieked, "Oh, pappy, how could you?" and began to bawl like a teething baby, if one may imagine a baby with the energy and the devastating voice of a jackass.

So perfect was the imitation of a child's cry, and so vast the scale of it, and so ridiculous the aspect of the performer, that all gravity was swept from the place as if by a hurricane, and almost everybody there joined in the crash of laughter provoked by the exhibition. Then the small mob began to take its revenge. It guyed its poor victim, baited him, worried him, as dogs do with a cornered cat.

"'I'M GOING TO SET MY CAP FOR YOU.'"

Finally Marsh was about to take an innings, but Barrow said:

"Never mind now—leave him alone. You've no account with him but a money account. I'll take care of that myself."

The worried landlady gave Barrow a grateful look for his championship of the abused stranger; and the pet of the house, a very prism in her cheap but ravishing Sunday rig, blew him a kiss from the tips of her fingers and said, with a sweet little toss of her head:

"You're the only man here, and I'm going to set my cap for you, you dear old thing."

It took a good deal of argument and persuasion to get Tracy to entertain the idea of breakfast. He at first said he would never eat again in that house; and added that he had enough firmness of character, he trusted, to enable him to starve like a man when the alternative was to eat insult with his bread.

When he had finished his breakfast, Barrow took him to his room, furnished him a pipe, and said cheerily:

"*Now*, old fellow, take in your battle-flag out of the wet, you're not in the hostile camp any more. You're a little upset by your troubles, and that's natural enough, but don't let your mind run on them any more than you can help. You must keep your mind amused—you must, indeed."

"Oh, miserable me!"

"Don't! There's just pure heart-break in that tone. It's just as I say; you've got to get right down to it and amuse your mind, as if it was salvation."

"They're easy words to say, Barrow, but how am I going to amuse a mind that finds itself suddenly assaulted and overwhelmed by disasters. No—no, the bare idea of amusement is repulsive to my feelings. Let us talk of death and funerals."

"No—not yet. That would be giving up the ship. We'll not give up the ship yet. I'm going to amuse you; I sent Brady out for the wherewithal before you finished breakfast."

"You did? What is it?"

"Come, this is a good sign—curiosity. Oh, there's hope for you yet."

NO 3 FORCED THE GHOST OF A SMILE."

CHAPTER XIV.

BRADY arrived with a box, and departed, after saying:

"They're finishing one up, but they'll be along as soon as it's done."

Barrow took a frameless oil portrait a foot square from the box, set it up in a good light, without comment, and reached for another, taking a furtive glance at Tracy meantime. The stony solemnity in Tracy's face remained as it was, and gave out no sign of interest. Barrow placed the second portrait beside the first, and stole another glance while reaching for the third. The stone image softened a shade. No. 3 forced the ghost of a smile, No. 4 swept indifference wholly away, and No. 5 started a laugh.

"Oh, you're all right yet," said Barrow; "you see, you're not past amusement."

The pictures were fearful as to color, and atrocious as to drawing and expression; but the feature which squelched animosity and made them funny was a feature which could not achieve its full force in a single picture, but required the assistance of repetition. One loudly-dressed mechanic, in stately attitude, with his hand on a cannon, ashore, and a ship riding at anchor

in the offing—this is merely odd; but when one sees the same cannon and the same ship in fourteen pictures in a row, and a different mechanic standing watch in each, the thing gets to be funny.

"Explain—explain these aberrations," said Tracy.

"Well, they are not the achievement of a single intellect, a single talent—it takes two to do these miracles. They are collaborations; the one artist does the figure, the other the accessories. The figure-artist is a German shoemaker with an untaught passion for art, the other is a simple-hearted old Yankee sailor man, whose possibilities are strictly limited to his ship, his cannon, and his patch of petrified sea. They work these things up from twenty-five cent tintypes; they get six dollars apiece for them, and they can grind out a couple a day when they strike what they call a boost—that is, an inspiration."

"People actually pay money for these calumnies?"

"They actually do—and quite willingly, too. And these abortionists could double their trade and work the women in, if Captain Saltmarsh could whirl a horse in, or a piano, or a guitar, in place of his cannon. The fact is, he fatigues the market with that cannon. Even the male market, I mean. These fourteen in the procession are not all satisfied. One is an old "independent" fireman, and he wants an engine in place of the cannon; another is mate of a tug, and wants a tug in place of the ship—and so on."

"This *is* a most extraordinary form of robbery. It's interesting."

"Yes, and so are the artists. They are perfectly honest men and sincere. And the old sailor man is full of sound religion, and is as devoted a student of the Bible and misquoter of it as you can find anywhere. I don't know a better man or kinder-hearted old soul than Saltmarsh, although he does swear a little sometimes."

"He seems to be perfect. I want to know him, Barrow."

"You'll have the chance. I guess I hear them coming, now. We'll draw them out on their art, if you like."

The artists arrived and shook hands with great heartiness. The German was forty, and a little fleshy, with a shiny bald head and deferential manner. Captain Saltmarsh was sixty, tall, erect, powerfully built, with coal-black hair and whiskers. His horny hands and wrists were covered with tattoo-marks, and when his lips parted, his teeth showed up white and blemishless. His voice was the effortless deep bass of a church organ, and would disturb the tranquility of a gas flame fifty yards away.

"They're wonderful pictures," said Barrow. "We've been examining them."

"It is very pleasant dot you like dem," said Handel, the German, greatly pleased. "Und you, Herr Tracy, you haf peen bleased mit dem too, alretty."

"I can honestly say I have never seen anything just like them before."

"Schön!" cried the German, delighted. "You hear, Gaptain? here is a schentleman, yes, vot abbreciate unser aart."

"THE CAPTAIN."

The Captain was charmed, and said:

"Well, sir, we're thankful for a compliment yet, though they're not as scarce now as they used to be before we made a reputation."

"Getting the reputation is the uphill time in most things, Captain."

"It's so. It ain't enough to know how to reef a gasket, you've got to make the mate know you know it. That's reputation. The good word, said at the right time, that's the word that makes us; and evil be to him that evil thinks, as Isaiah says."

"It's very relevant, and hits the point exactly," said Tracy. "Where did you study art, Captain?"

"I haven't studied; it's a natural gift."

"He is born mit dose cannon in him. He tondt haf to do noding, his chenius do all de vork. Of he is asleep, und take a pencil in his hand, out come a cannon. Py crashus, of he could do a clavier, of he could do a guitar, of he could do a vashtub, it is a fortune, heiliger Yohanniss, it is yoost a fortune."

"Well, it is an immense pity that the business is hindered and limited in this unfortunate way."

The Captain grew a trifle excited himself now:

"You've said it, Mr. Tracy. Hindered? Well, I should say so. Why, look here. This fellow here, No. 11, he's a hackman —a flourishing hackman, I may say. He wants his hack in this picture. Wants it where the cannon is. I get around that difficulty by telling him the cannon's our trademark, so to speak— proves that the picture's our work, and I was afraid if we left it out people wouldn't know for certain if it was a Saltmarsh-Handel —now you wouldn't yourself——"

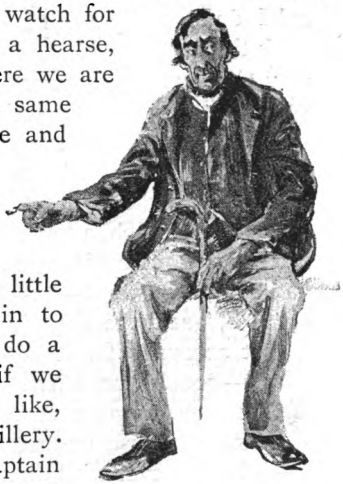
"What, Captain? You wrong yourself, indeed you do. Anyone who has once seen a genuine Saltmarsh-Handel is safe from imposture for ever. Strip it, flay it, skin it out of every detail but the bare color and expression, and that man will still recognize it, still stop to worship——"

"Oh, how it make me feel to hear dose oxpressions——"

——"still say to himself again, as he has said a hundred times before, the art of the Saltmarsh-Handel is an art apart; there is nothing in the heavens above or in the earth beneath that resembles it."

"Py chiminy, nur hören sie einmal. In my lifeday haf I never heard so brecious worts."

"So I talked him out of the hack, Mr. Tracy, and he let up on that, and said put in a hearse, then—because he's chief mate of a hearse, but don't own it—stands a watch for wages, you know. But I can't do a hearse, any more than I can a hack; so here we are—becalmed, you see. And it's the same with women and such. They come and they want a little johnry picture——"



"'DISCRIMINATION IS THE THIEF OF TIME.'"

"It's the accessories that make it a *genre?*"

"Yes, cannon, or cat, or any little thing like that, that you heave in to whoop up the effect. We could do a prodigious trade with the women if we could foreground the things they like, but they don't give a damn for artillery. Mine's the lack," continued the Captain with a sigh; "Andy's end of the business is all right—I tell you *he's* an artist from wayback!"

"Yoost hear dot old man! He always talk 'poud me like dot," purred the pleased German.

"Look at his work yourself! Fourteen portraits in a row. And no two of them alike."

"Now that you speak of it, it is true; I hadn't noticed it before. It is very remarkable. Unique, I suppose."

"I should say so. That's the very *thing* about Andy—he *discriminates*. Discrimination is the thief of time—forty-ninth psalm; but that ain't any matter, it's the honest thing, and it pays in the end."

"Yes, he certainly is great in that feature, one is obliged to admit it; but—now mind, I'm not really criticising—don't you think he is just a trifle over-strong in technique?"

The Captain's face was knocked expressionless by this remark. It remained quite vacant while he muttered to himself—"Technique—technique—poly-technique—pyro-technique: that's it, likely—fireworks—too much color." Then he spoke up with serenity and confidence, and said:

"Well, yes, he does pile it on pretty loud, but they all like it, you know—fact is, it's the life of the business. Take that No. 9, there, Evans the butcher. He drops into the stoodio as sober-colored as anything you ever see: *now* look at him. You can't tell him from scarlet fever. Well, it pleases that butcher to death. I'm making a study of a sausage-wreath to hang on the cannon, and I don't really reckon I can do it right, but if I can we can break the butcher."

"Unquestionably your confederate—I mean your—your fellow-craftsman—is a great colorist——"

"Oh, danke schön!"

——"in fact, a quite extraordinary colorist; a colorist, I make bold to say, without imitator here or abroad—and with a most bold and effective touch, a touch like a battering-ram; and a manner so peculiar and romantic, and extraneous, and *ad libitum*, and heart-searching, that—that—he—he is an impressionist, I presume?"

"No," said the Captain, simply, "he is a Presbyterian."

"It accounts for it all—all—there's something divine about his art—soulful, unsatisfactory, yearning, dim-hearkening on the void horizon, vague-murmuring to the spirit out of ultramarine distances and far-sounding cataclysms of uncreated space—oh, if he—if he has ever tried distemper?"

The Captain answered up with energy:

"Not if he knows himself! But his dog has, and——"

"Oh, no, it vas not *my* dog."

"Why, you *said* it was your dog."

"Oh, no, Captain, I——"

"It was a white dog, wasn't it, with his tail docked, and one ear gone—and——"

"Dot's him! Dot's him!—der ferry dog. Wy, py Chorge, dot dog he vould eat baint yoost de same like——"

"Well, never mind that, now—'vast heaving—I never saw such a man. You start him on that dog and he'll dispute a year. Blamed if I haven't *seen* him keep it up a level two hours and a half."

"Why, Captain!" said Barrow. 'I guess that must be hearsay."

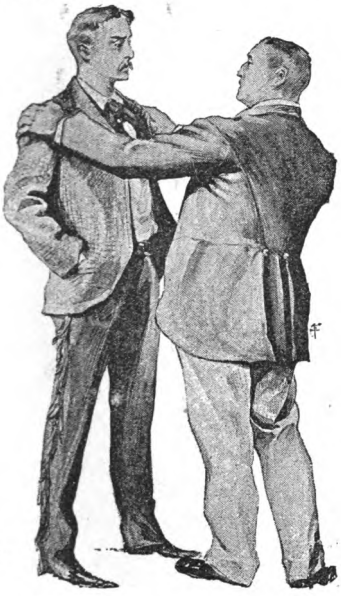
"No, sir, no hearsay about it—he disputed with me."

"I don't see how you stood it."

"Oh, you've got to—if you run with Andy. But it's the only fault he's got."

"Ain't you afraid of acquiring it?"

"Oh, no," said the Captain, tranquilly; "no danger of that, I reckon."



"'LOOK ME IN THE EYE, MY BOY.'"

The artists presently took their leave. Then Barrow put his hands on Tracy's shoulders and said:

"Look me in the eye, my boy. Steady, steady. There—it's just as I thought—hoped, anyway; *you're* all right, thank goodness. Nothing the matter with your mind. But don't do that again, even for fun. It isn't wise. They wouldn't have believed you if you'd *been* an earl's son. It was a mistake; you see that yourself."

"Yes—it *was* a mistake."

"Well, just drop it out of your mind; it's no harm; we all make them. Pull your courage together, and don't brood, and don't give up. I'm at your back, and we'll pull through, don't you be afraid."

When he was gone, Barrow walked the floor a good while, uneasy in his mind. He said to himself, "I'm troubled about him. He never would have made a break like that if he hadn't been a little off his balance. But I know what being out of work and no prospect ahead can do for a man. First, it knocks the pluck out of him and drags his pride in the dirt; worry does the rest, and his mind gets shaky. I must talk to these people. No; if there's any humanity in them—and there is, at bottom—they'll be easier on him if they think his troubles have disturbed his reason. But I've got to find him some work; work's the only medicine for his disease. Poor devil! away off here, and not a friend."

(To be continued.)

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

"I serve under Meredith's colours. Contemptible to me are the whole conditions of contemporary life, this whole stuffy business of living in houses and going to offices . . . and making believe that we are at peace because we have all the mortality and none of the exhilaration of war . . . So I permit myself, under even painfully close restrictions, slight approximations to a life that seems to me both more healthy and more amusing." Robert Louis Stevenson.

The Idlers' Club.

Jerome introduces the subject of holidays.

ON the first fine day in spring, the average wife, gazing out of window the while, with a far-away, dreamy look in her eyes, says to the average husband, "Where shall we go for our holiday this year, dear?" To which the average husband, looking up from his paper in surprise, replies: "Eh, what? Holidays! Oh, my dear, we don't want to think about that now. Why we've only just got over Christmas." In the bitter stormy days of April and May, the subject becomes temporarily frozen into oblivion. Under the sunshine of June, it is revived; and paterfamilias, with the generosity born of the reflection that he has plenty of time before him in which to explain away his promises, concurs in extravagant arrangements for the taking of the whole family, including the nurse and the baby, for a six weeks' scamper through Italy, or a two months' cruise round the Mediterranean. During July, the proposed tour is discussed with much enthusiasm by the younger members of the family; with growing suspicion, on the part of materfamilias, that it will never come off; and with cheery recklessness as to cost, on the part of the man, who has made up his mind not to be let in for anything of the kind. Towards the end of the month, however, paterfamilias assumes a less airy and irresponsible attitude towards the matter. He knows that soon he will have to wrestle with the question in grim earnest. To help him, and others, to a decision, we have here gathered together the reports and views of various travellers. The gentlemen who follow me speak of the places they recommend from personal experience—at least, that is the idea. Many of their statements may, I am convinced, be relied upon; and I see no reason why a man—failing any more sensible method of selection—should not be guided by their advice. I admit that I, likewise, see no reason why he should. For my own part, I have never gone anywhere at anybody else's suggestion, without bitterly repenting it, and, indeed, so generally has this proved the case, that it is now sufficient for a friend to urge a locality upon me to make me resolve never, by any chance, to visit it—at all events, not in the pursuit of pleasure. But then, perhaps, I am unfortunate.

Alden makes choice of the roof of St. Peter's.

If I could have my choice of a place in which to spend a summer vacation, I should take the roof of St. Peter's. There is a neat little cottage on the roof, which is occupied by a *custode* who belongs to the old and not the new Italy, and is therefore bribable to the extent of taking a surreptitious lodger. The roof is a vast expanse of smooth concrete, covering several acres, and pleasingly diversified with domes and statues. The air is always pure, and the view is superb. In July or August, when the sane man takes his vacation, the roof of St. Peter's is absolutely deserted, except by the *custode* and a rare German tourist, who is following the prescriptions in his guide-book with the conscientious fidelity with which he would follow the prescriptions of his doctor. There is always shade to be found on the roof by keeping in the shadow of the great dome, and I should slowly revolve around it so as constantly to keep the sun on the opposite side of it. This would give me a feeling of kinship to the celestial bodies which would be very welcome to a proud and chaste spirit. No noise would reach me except the faint murmur of the organ, and the soothing, if not brilliant, remarks of the doves who make their home on the roof. I could see, not only the mountains and the Mediterranean, but the whole panorama of the last two or three thousand years, that is, provided I brushed up my ancient and modern history. There would be absolutely nothing, not even the postman, or the morning paper, to disturb the perfect quiet of the place. Even the German tourist would only be a perspiring proof of the miseries of that earthly life from which I should have escaped. Why a man should wear out his legs and boots in climbing the Alps and falling down again, when he can climb St. Peter's and stay there, is something that I cannot make out. If you cannot be happy without the opportunity of falling over a precipice, try falling through one of the windows of the great dome, and landing on a plump priest. I venture to say that the Alps cannot afford a sensation such as yours would be.

* * * *

He recommends the tourist to "do as Rome does."

Of course you will think me anything but in earnest when I recommend Rome as a good place for a summer vacation. That is, because you accept the popular Anglo-Saxon tradition concerning the Roman climate. In point of fact, Rome is far healthier in midsummer than it is in winter. In July, the death-rate is about 20 in a thousand, while in February and March it rises to 28 and 30

in a thousand. In midsummer there are, in a population of about 415,000, three deaths weekly of typhoid fever, and from four to five of malarial fever. As for the famous "Roman fever," it is something of which the Romans have never heard, except from foreigners. Then, too, Rome is not excessively hot in summer. The thermometer rarely rises above 84°, which is much lower than the temperature of Milan or Florence. Every day, at about two o'clock, the sea-breeze reaches the city, and a more delicious breeze you never felt. The nights are always cool, and there are no mosquitoes worth speaking of. The Roman stays in Rome in the summer. He goes for a fortnight into the country in May, and again in October, for he knows when the country is at its best, but he prefers Rome to any other place in July and August. Early in the morning, he throws open all his windows, and then by seven o'clock shuts them tight, and keeps out the hot air until the sea-breeze arrives. In the evening, he lives in the open air. The Piazza Colonna, which the winter tourist knows only as a windy and dusty spot, becomes a second Piazza San Marco in summer, and all the world eats ices and listens to the band at the foot of the column of Antoninus. Then, for the only time in the whole year, Rome belongs to the Romans, and the foreign tourist no longer strews her streets with broken French and Italian. I have spent many summers in Rome, and I know that the great mistake which tourists make is to avoid Rome in midsummer, and visit it in rainy and windy winter, as if they were in search of the bronchitis and pneumonia, which they too often succeed in finding.

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G. R. Sims dislikes solitude.

Tot homines, quot sententiæ, and one man's nectar is another man's asafœtida. Some men when they take a holiday, or have a holiday given them, like to get away to a lonely spot, and contemplate what they are pleased to call the beauties of nature. I like the beauties of nature myself, but I prefer to share the spectacle with a number of my fellow-creatures. The man who climbs to the top of a mountain, and sits down to have a sunset all to himself, is an unsociable egoist. I am as uncomfortable when I get a beautiful view and there is no one near me to share in the privilege as I should be if I found myself alone in a vast theatre while a spectacular drama was in progress. King Ludwig, of Bavaria, used to have a Wagner opera all to himself, and a glorious palace lighted up at midnight with twenty thousand candles all to

himself, and we know what the end of that was. The desire for solitude is the beginning of madness. To work, a man needs sometimes to be alone, but when he plays he wants society, and as much of it as he can get. Our holidays are our play days, and the more players there are the merrier the game is. Having made this plain statement of my sentiments you will understand why I consider Blackpool one of the best places for a busy worker to go to for a holiday.

* * * *

And therefore likes Blackpool.

The great charm of Blackpool is that there is always something going on. There is not a single hour of the twenty-four when you can't go out and see people enjoying themselves. Excursion trains loaded with Lancashire toilers discharge their living freight as early as three o'clock in the morning, and so the early revellers fill the streets and line the shore as the late revellers are going home. At four o'clock in the morning, one can stroll on the pier and find hundreds of couples dancing to the band they have brought with them. Once in this merry Blackpool the crowd was so great outside one of the great pleasure gardens that the manager opened his doors, summoned his dramatic company in hot haste, and gave the excursionists a performance of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in the great theatre at six a.m. If you don't care for music or dancing, or the drama, there are always the oyster stalls and the mock auctions. The oyster stalls never shut during the season. There are relays of assistants armed with knives, and prepared for all comers, and the mock auctioneers succeed and resemble each other so long as a customer is to be found or a "bargain" remains unsold. Until I had seen Blackpool, I thought Madrid the gayest town in the world. There the tramways run through the night, the newspaper boys cry "the latest edition" on the Puerta del Sol till 3 a.m., and you can find somebody conspiring against the Government at a street corner at every hour of the day or night. Nobody conspires in Blackpool, but everybody dances, and eats oysters, or buys something at a mock auction. And the *joie de vivre* is writ large upon every face you meet from end to end of the gay city by the sea.

* * * *

Its palaces, and halls, and towers.

In many seaside places where the Mayor and Corporation have stuck up a notice that the sea is only free before eight a.m., they think they have done quite enough for the comfort and amusement of the visitor. There are, of course, places where the local

authorities are more energetic. In one, visitors are not allowed to take their dogs on to the lawn when the band plays, at another they prosecute the newsvendors who sell the Sunday papers, and in a third they swear in special constables every Sunday to fight the Salvation Army. But in Blackpool they do much more than this. There is a marvellous Winter Garden capable of accommodating 35,000 people, and this gigantic establishment contains a theatre as big as the Alhambra, where grand ballets are given twice a day, an opera house for high-class performances, a concert hall, and a skating rink. Close by the Winter Gardens are the Royal Palace Gardens, which cover thirty-five acres, and where day and night hordes of happy couples chase the hours with flying feet, to the music of splendid bands. An admission fee of sixpence covers an endless round of amusements. In Blackpool, besides these, there are theatre and music halls, and Zoological Gardens, and now, to be thoroughly up to date, the worthy Blackpoolers are actually erecting *two* Eiffel Towers. The holiday-maker who can't be happy with a choice of two Eiffel Towers must be hard to please indeed.

* * * *

It is no place for McDougal.

It is the fashion for the travelled Englishman to sneer at England and the English in the matter of out-door amusements, and to say that they order these things better in France. I have been to most of the pleasure-haunts of Europe, and until I had seen Blackpool I considered the sneer was well deserved. But Blackpool is the exception which proves the rule. There the pleasure-seeking masses are catered for in a sensible way, and the masses show their appreciation by rarely abusing the privileges accorded to them. Rough as are many of the people who flock to that Lancashire playground in hundreds of thousands there is no rioting, no rowdyism, no wilful destruction, and very little drunkenness. They dance and sing, and amuse themselves with the light-hearted gaiety that was once everywhere in this our merry England before the Puritans cut the maypoles down and filled the statute book with such fearful laws anent the selling of cakes and ale, that the man who supplies a free-born Briton with music and light refreshment is always within measurable distance of the police court. If you have never been to Blackpool, go. For a man who likes to see his fellow-creatures happy, and who doesn't mind enjoying himself also after the good old English fashion, it is the best place in which to spend a holiday.

Frank Mathew raises the Irish Question.

Though you meet the British tourist in Ispahan or on Cotopaxi, you would be safe from him in the West of Ireland, yet in the wide world you could find no more beautiful country. One track—round by Killarney—swarms with tourists, but who ever heard of a Cockney in Lisdoonvarna or Bunowen? Lisdoonvarna Spa lies among the Clare Hills, by the Atlantic coast; it boasts half-a-dozen homely and lively hotels, and five sickening springs. At one spring, "Biddy"—a dishevelled old peasant—gives you to drink from dirty glasses, and at the others you help yourself. There is wonderful scenery hard by, and to the north lie the Burren Hills, facing the Arran Islands, and sacred to the author of "Hurrish," so that at small cost you can

"Ride at twilight through the *lawless* land."

Lisdoonvarna's chief charm is the priesthood; you meet hundreds of priests there, every type from the Tipperary ecclesiastic to the hot curate from the mountains, and it is as well to make friends with them; for the only way to know Ireland is to stop in outlandish villages and make friends with the innkeeper and the curate. One might spend months with the gentry and learn nothing of the peasants. The old hospitable ways live still in the country-houses. I have never met the rollicking servant of fiction, but queer blunders are common enough. Once I remember in the West a footman had been given two brown paper parcels, one containing oats for the horse, and one my lunch. And when the train had started, and I grew hungry and opened my parcel, I found he had given me the oats.

* * * *

He recommends Connemara.

The right trip round Connemara is a drive on an outside car through the mountains. You can do it in two days, and feel you have seen enough naked mountains and black lakes to last you a lifetime. But you ought to break the trip on the Coast, and explore undiscovered country. As for the hotels in the wilds, their variety is infinite, from the pot-house where the fare is bacon and eggs, to Renvyle House, an old country-house where the host is Blake of Renvyle, a broken landlord. To sit gracefully and safely on an outside car needs practice, but when you are used to it there is no way of travelling so delightful. And it has a spice of adventure, for one may be thrown off at any moment. Perhaps this is why most of the drivers—the "jarveys"—are philosophic, and have a jaunty recklessness. I shall never forget driving—like one of

Lever's heroes—with a drunken jarvey. There was no stopping him, and Gilpin's ride was slow to it. The peasants cheered us as we passed; it was only five miles, but I thought it was fifty. Another time, on an outside car, we dashed gaily round a corner, just as a four-in-hand passed at full speed, "An' if we'd been going a little fasther," said the jarvey, calmly, "we'd have been disthroyed."

* * * *

And how to travel therethrough.

If you are in a hurry in Ireland (no one ever should be) it is wiser to travel by car, but if you wish to study the scenery quietly you should go by train. There is no better change after the rush of London than to jog quietly through the Irish hills on one of those easy-going Light Railways; every few miles the train stops at villages with incredible names—while the guard has a chat with the stationmaster, and the peasants in the third-class behind howl friendly taunts at the engine-driver. "Ah, now, what are ye waitin' for? Why didn't ye bile the wather before 'twas time to starrt?"—and every village has its legend of English massacres or native moonlighters. So here is a new country within easy reach, for one can leave Euston at eight in the morning, sleep in Dublin, and dine next day in Lisdoonvarna or in Connemara, where the folks go fishing in coracles. And, though as an Irishman I speak partially, I can scarcely think any man would come back from the trip without pleasant memories of the wheedling jarveys, the kindly brogue, and the warm welcome, and even of the multitudinous beggar-women, who begin with "Bless your handsome face," then, if you turn a deaf ear to them, convince you that you are too ugly to live.

* * * *

Burgin thinks wise men should go to the East.

It's really a shame to tell about Therapia, because English people will want to go there and spoil it. It is just before you get to the Black Sea mouth of the Bosphorus, and is the summer resort of the diplomats, Jews, Greeks, and *jeunesse doré* of Constantinople. You can get there in four days overland if you like, but it is far pleasanter to run down to Cook's, book right through to Constantinople *viâ* Marseilles and Naples, or Athens, or Smyrna, and take double that time. It will cost about twenty pounds, without reckoning the inevitable bad coral and lava jewellery of Naples, and the sham antiquities at Smyrna or Athens. Be careful when at Naples to return to the steamer in time. The sophisti-

cated and sinful Neapolitan boatman has a habit of charging each passenger a pound for taking him back to the vessel when she is getting up steam. Most of the young ladies on board will gush about Hero and Leander as you go up the Hellespont, but they will quote modern versions, and ignore Marlowe's mighty lines which tell that when Leander

"Spied her tower, long star'd he on't,
And pray'd the narrow, toiling Hellespont
To part in twain, that he might come and go."

It is worth the twenty pounds to see Constantinople (from the water) at sunrise; and when you have once landed you would cheerfully give twice that amount to be back on board again if your nose is averse to "forty well-defined and separate stinks." Of course, you'll have to pay *bakshish*, or the Custom House man will make you regret it. The Hotel Royal is comfortable, the charges about twenty-five francs a day; if you look at a candle, the charge is one franc extra. To hint at a desire to purchase soap would be regarded as the whim of a madman or a millionaire. It is a good plan to write out to Petala's Hotel at Therapia before the summer season begins, and secure rooms overlooking the Bosphorus. The hotel fronts the water just at the bend where the little Greek fishing village ends, and the long road leading to the English Embassy (a mongrel-looking wooden edifice) begins.

* * * *

He has a programme.

What do you do when you get there? Many things. Go for long rides over the hills, and explore all the little villages; or, better still, visit Captain Palmer's lifeboat station at Kilios, and try to count the sand-covered timbers of numberless wrecks. If it be a hot day, he will take you out in the lifeboat and practise upsetting it—and you. The most delicious little red mullet in the world are to be found there; also *yaourt*—curdled milk, with a pleasantly acid taste. You can "paddle your own" caique on the Bosphorus, but it is wiser to let a native do it for you. If you have letters to the Embassy people or English residents, they'll offer you any amount of tennis and picnics to Giant's Mountain, or the Sweet Waters, where you will be fed on kid baked in a hole in the ground. When the perfumed gloom of night falls over the water, you are sure to be asked to join a serenading party. The effect can't be put into words; it's hopeless to attempt it. The music, the murmuring ripple of the water against the boat, the lamp-lit little villages and

marble palaces on either shore, the wail of a grape-hunting jackal in the firefly-haunted vineyards, the—the atmosphere, in short, all combine to enchant you. And then, just as you are fain for the fair white moon, a long caique glides noiselessly past, filled with shrouded forms of motionless women, and you dream of the sheeted dead who rise from their graves and wander through the night. The Greeks never seem to sleep at night. Their mission is to surfeit the world with mirth and music and colour. Nobody does anything in a hurry, except the mad English, who play cricket matches at Beikos over on the Asiatic side. And every Turk has a manner. The meanest peasant, although he may cheat you, will do it with such irreproachable dignity that it is rather pleasant to be deceived than otherwise. But it's useless to tell you any more. If you can't flit off to Therapia, I don't want to trouble your lives with memories of that sunshine-flooded world of melons and magnolias; of warmth and light and colour; of dogs and dirt and fleas; of quaint, cool bazaars and nightingale-haunted woods; of old-world cruelty and patriarchal kindliness; of fierce, deep passion and Arcadian simplicity. See for yourselves and, *Mashallah*, the *narghileh* of delight shall be yours to smoke, the *pilaff* of contentment shall fatten you, the *rahat lakoum* of the Faithful gladden your livers for many moons. *Inshallah*, I have spoken. Go!

* * * *

Hatton likes Lucerne.

Lucerne has, to my thinking, a special advantage over all other "fashionable rendezvous," so-called, in Switzerland. It has a wonderful organ. At the moment, I don't remember where the other organ is, but Lucerne has the reputation of possessing the second most remarkable organ in the world. I don't want to hear the first; the second best is "good enough for me." A very picturesque city, Lucerne, with its ancient watch towers and fortifications, its fine old bridge called the Kapellbrücke, its chestnut trees, its swelling Reuss, its dreamy lake, and its mountains that climb into the blue skies with white caps and softening veils of mist. At your hotel, even early in the season, you can lounge into the hall and sip your coffee to the music of an orchestra comprising some of the best instrumentalists from La Scala. And the market! Years of miscellaneous travel would hardly lead you to a more picturesque scene. It is only a market for mere local requirements. Lucerne boasts of having no trade, no manufactory of any kind. All she has to do is to manage her

hotels and make her visitors happy. I once thought it would be a good idea to settle down for awhile at Lucerne and write. There are authors who cannot work outside a garret, others who need luxurious surroundings. Hawthorne couldn't endure anyone near him when he was at work. Scott wrote "Rokeby" with his family and servants and a crew of carpenters and plasterers all about him. I recall the time when I could write anywhere. But as a literary workshop Lucerne was too much for me. Pilatus, the Rigi, and the rest came down upon me whenever in their lordly presence I attempted to begin my trivial labours. I could never get free from Pilatus and his mighty companions. They hemmed me in. They frowned upon me. I seemed so small when I looked up at them that I hardly knew my own name. My thoughts would go travelling up their misty paths without ever reaching their snowy peaks. In Cumberland or the Derbyshire Dales, one's mind can step right over the leafy hills and picture the other side; but these Swiss mountains are endless. They march on, range upon range; they stand forth clear and sharp in peaks of ice and snow, and the next minute they disappear like ghosts in a misty world. No, I would not advise any Idler to go to Lucerne thinking to combine holiday with work; but the Idler who really does idle, and can afford the luxury of leisure, the rival of Zurich is the very ideal resort for him.

* * * *

Its wonderful organ.

It is not the after-dinner music of the little band from La Scala, nor the shooting gallery by the river; it is not the glacier-graden, nor the Castle of Neuhabsburg, nor the pleasant parties you can join on expeditions to see the sun set on the Rigi, that make Lucerne the *beau ideal* holiday resort for the Idler; it is the organ. To my mind that organ is Lucerne. I wrote a story to accompany its music, but I purposely dropped it over a precipice on Mount Pilatus, and I hope it has done no injury to the birds of prey that circled round it as it went careering into space. You stroll round to the organist of the fine old church that is only a stone's throw from your hotel, and induce him to ascend the organ loft. The verger opens the church door, and shows you into a pew. You are alone. The cool atmosphere is a pleasant change from the outer sunshine. The marble effigies and stone saints look very solemn, not to say lonely. A stray sunbeam, piercing the coloured glass, makes a red and gold splash upon the floor. A bat in the rafters shoots across the shadows above

you; and just then the organ begins to contribute its celestial music to the scene. It has wonderful reedy effects, imitations of the human voice, and gives forth idealisations of angelic choirs. In its lower registers it carries the very thunders of the winds and storms of the Great Architect Himself. "The Lost Chord," by Sullivan, is a mere suggestion compared with the harmonious narrative with which the Lucerne organist fills the receptive mind. You are away in the mountains. The shepherd is herding his flocks. You hear his merry pipe. The sheep-bells tinkle in the summer air. You can detect the bleating of the young lambs, and the responses of the sympathetic ewes. The church, with its effigies and its lancet windows, gradually fades away; you are in the mountain village. Presently you feel that dark clouds are spreading over the sunny landscape. A storm is coming on. The shepherd is calling to his flocks. You hear the cries of startled birds. You almost feel the suffocating effect of the silently-gathering thunder-storm. Now there is a distant rumble. The storm is coming down from the hill tops, creeping into the mountain gorges. Then there is a sudden crash that seems to shake you where you sit. If you do not see the lightning you know that there has been a blinding flash. The storm has now full possession of the mountain village and the foothills. It fills the world so far as the shepherd and his flocks are concerned. With the next roll of the thunder down comes the rain. The heavens are opened, the floodgates are let loose. Your corporal body may still be sitting in that old church pew, but your spiritual essence is out in the storm. You are with the shepherd, you hear the cries of his flock, you see the anxious faces in the village, you hear their prayers for his safety; and then the thunder peals move off into the far distance. The rain gradually ceases, the clouds disperse, the sun sets in a golden splendour, the new moon rises, a silver bow in the still heavens; and you hear the voices of the choir up in the mountain chapel singing the evening hymn. Shut your eyes, and you are in presence of one of the most perfect choirs it is possible to have heard; soprano, tenor, contralto, baritone, bass; and always just a tone or two above the rest, the angel-like soprano carrying the melody. The scoring is perfect; the effect such as poets dream of when they hear the voices of the cherubim and seraphim. You follow with every sense the heavenly sounds, follow them upwards beneath the silvery moon into the mountains; you see the lights blinking in the village windows, until at last the music ceases,

and you are alone again in the quiet, cold church. But any day you can make this wonderful journey into the mountains. Any day you can visit the Alpine villages, and take the scenery into your mind, enjoy the pleasures of sun and shower, of storm and calm, watch the sunset, hear the evening hymn, see the rising moon, and journey through realms of fact and fancy to your heart's content, only really having walked round the corner from your hotel into the adjacent church.

* * * *

Zangwill has discovered the ideal resort.

I think it most unfair to try to worm out of a man, by the insidious subterfuge of a symposium, the earthly paradise he has discovered. Naturally, one does not go to the trouble of accidentally lighting upon an unsuspected haven, to give away the secret to ten million other Idlers. But, perhaps, even if I tell them the name of the place, I shall not be giving away the secret. I know that I would have paid handsomely for the tip, myself, years ago, before I chanced on the great discovery which has made all my holidays real boons, and pleasure trips quite a pleasure. For in those bad old times I used to go through all the horrors of preliminary indecision, which are still, alas! the lot of the vast majority. I used to travel for weeks in Bradshaw, and end by sticking a pin at random between the leaves as if it were a Bible, vowing to go where destiny pointed. Once the pin stuck at London, and so I had to stick there too, and was defrauded of my holiday. But even when the pin sent me to the Needles, or Putney, or nicer places, I was invariably disappointed. Like the inquisitive and precocious infant of the poem, I was always asking for the address of Peace, but whenever I called I was told that she was not in, while the mocking refrain seemed to ring in my ears: "Not there, not there, my child." And at last I asked angrily of the rocks and caves: "Will no one tell me where Peace may be found? Wherever I go I find she is somewhere else." Then, at last, one nymph's soft heart grew tender and pitiful towards me, and Echo, hardly waiting till I had completed my sentence, answered: "Somewhere Else."

* * * *

He recommends it to others.

A wild thrill of joy ran through me. At last I had found the solution of the haunting puzzle. Somewhere Else. That was it. Not Scotland, nor Switzerland, nor Japan. None of the common places of travel. But Somewhere Else. Wherever I went, I wished I had gone

Somewhere Else. Then, why not go there at first? What was the good of repining when it was too late? In future, I would make a bee-line for the abode of Peace—not hesitate and shilly-shally, and then go to Bournemouth, or Norway, or Antwerp, only to be sorry I had not gone to Somewhere Else direct. In a flash, all the glories of the discovery crowded upon me—the gain of time, temper, money, everything. "A thousand thanks, sweet Echo," I cried. "My obedience to thy advice shall prove that I am not ungrateful." Echo, with cynical candour, shouted "Great fool," but I cannot follow her in her end-of-the-century philosophy. And I have taken her advice. I went Somewhere Else immediately, and since then I have gone there every year regularly. My wife does not care for it, and suggests all sorts of conventional places, such as Monte Carlo and Southend, but wherever she goes, be it the most beautiful spot on earth, I remain faithful to my discovery, and go to Somewhere Else, where Peace never fails to greet me with the special welcome accorded to an annual visitor. The place grows upon me with every season. Sometimes, I think I should like to stay on and die there. No other spot in the wide universe has half such charm for me, and even when I do die, I don't think I shall go to where all the other happy Idlers go. I shall go to Somewhere Else.

* * * *

He dilateth on its manifold superiorities to all other resorts.

For Cromer may be the garden of sleep, but you shall find sleepier gardens and more papaverous poppies—Somewhere Else. The mountain-pines of Switzerland may be tall, and the skies of Italy blue, but there are taller pines and bluer skies—Somewhere Else. The bay of San Francisco may be beautiful, and the landscapes of Provence lovely, and the crags of Norway sublime, but Somewhere Else there are fairer visions and scenes more majestical—

> "An ampler æther, a diviner air,
> And fields invested with purpureal gleams."

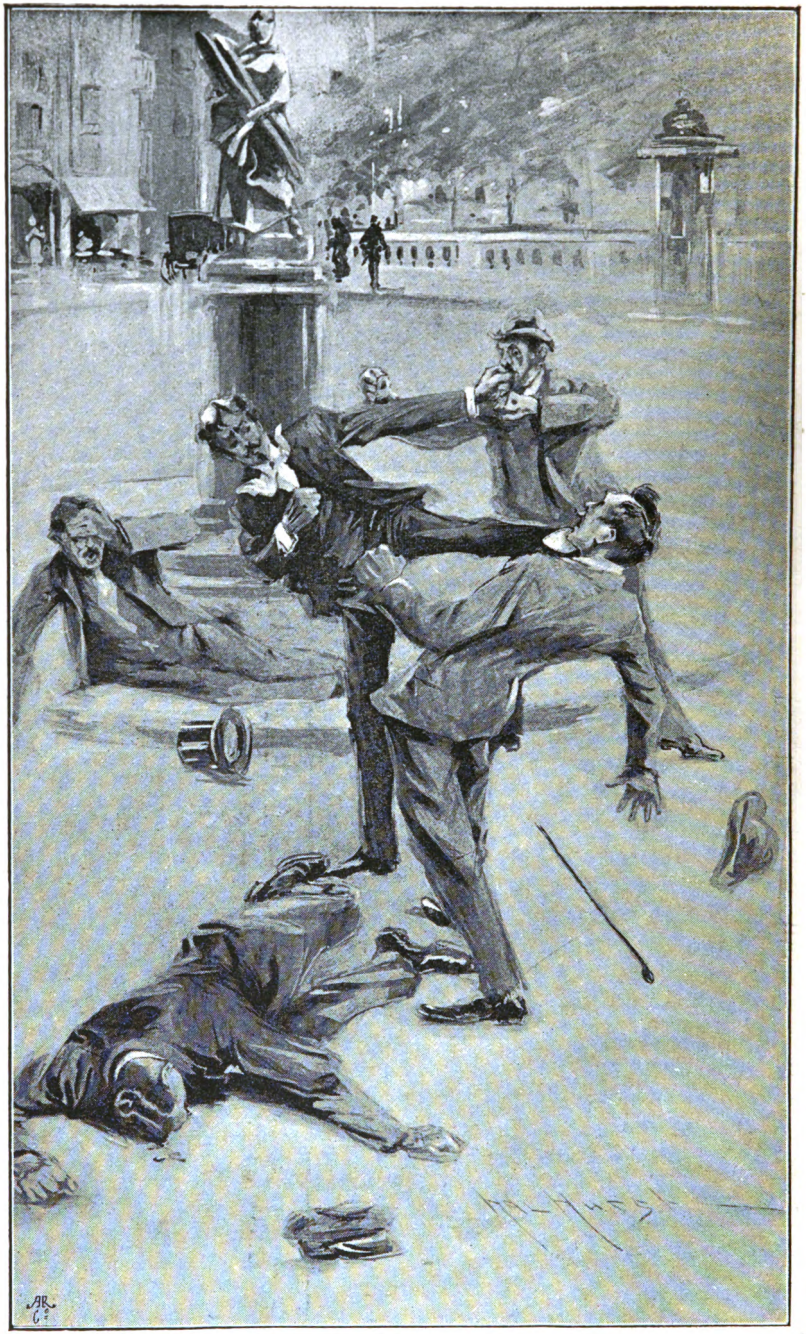
It never palls upon you—Somewhere Else. Every loved landmark grows dearer to you year by year, and year by year apartments are cheaper—Somewhere Else. The facilities for getting to it are enormous. All roads lead to it, far more truly than to Rome. There can be no accidents on the journey. How often do we read of people setting forth on their holidays full of life and hope—yea, sometimes even on their honeymoon—and lo! a signalman nods, or a bridge breaks, and they are left mangled on the rails or

washed into the river. And to think that they would have escaped if they had only gone to Somewhere Else! Too late the weeping relatives wring their hands and moan the remark. Henceforth, among the ten million Idlers, who will be guided by me? There will be no more tragedies by flood or field. Railway assurance will become a thing of the past, and a fatal blow will be struck at modern hebdomadal journalism. To turn to minor matters, your friends can never utter the irritating "I told you not to go there!" if you have been to Somewhere Else. And you need not label your luggage; that always goes to Somewhere Else of itself. Last advantage of Somewhere Else, you may show your face in it, though you departed last year without paying your bill. There are no creditors in this blessed haven. Earth's load drops off your shoulders when you go to Somewhere Else.

* * * *

But dreadetn its one drawback.

I give this counsel in a disinterested spirit. I have not made speculative purchases of land, I am not booming a generous jerry-builder. And yet I cannot help reflecting apprehensively on the consequences of my recommendation. Already I see my sweet retreat the prey of the howling mob; I hear the German band playing on the stone parade, and catch the sad strains of the comic singer. Sacrilegious feet tramp the solitudes, and sandwich papers become common objects of the sea-shore. Shilling yachts will ply where I watched the curlew curling, and new villas will totter on the edge of the ocean and beguile the innocent billows to be house-breakers. Nay, the place will become the Alsatia of humanity, the refuge for all those men and women people would rather see Somewhere Else, and whose travelling expenses they will perchance defray. Imagination reels before the horror of such an agglomeration of the unamiable. And the terrible thing about my terrestrial paradise is that there is no escaping from it. Everything has the defects of its qualities, and this is the reverse of the dazzling medal—the drawback which annuls all the advantages of Somewhere Else in the event of its becoming popular. In vain shall I then endeavour to flee from it. Though I projected myself from the giant cannon that sent Jules Verne's hero to the moon, I should inevitably arrive—boomerang-like—at Somewhere Else.



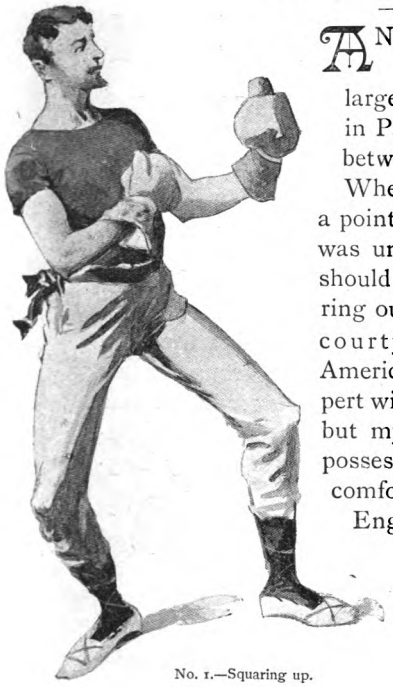
"FIGHTING WITH FOUR FISTS."

THE IDLER.

Fighting with Four Fists.

By Robert Barr.

Illustrations by Hal Hurst.



No. 1.—Squaring up.

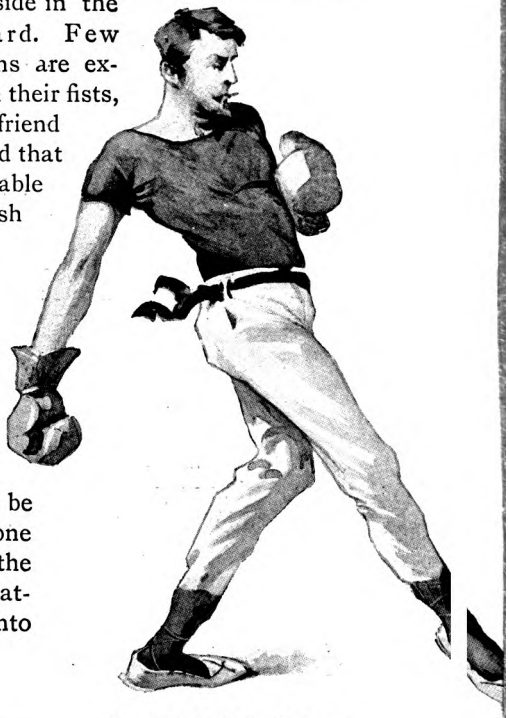
AN artist friend of mine, whose statuary now adorns the Hotel de Ville of a large Western city, was once studying in Paris. A question of etiquette arose between him and a French student. When the discussion had reached such a point that words failed to deal with it, it was unanimously agreed that the dispute should be referred for final settlement to a ring outside in the courtyard. Few Americans are expert with their fists, but my friend possessed that comfortable English theory, which had doubtless descended to him from his forefathers, relative to the number of Frenchmen that can be conveniently dealt with by one Anglo-Saxon, so, on reaching the courtyard, he struck the correct attitude for putting his theory into practice. The poet remarks—

"Thrice armed is he who hath his quarrel just,"

and the flippant man has added—

"But four times he who gets his blow in fust."

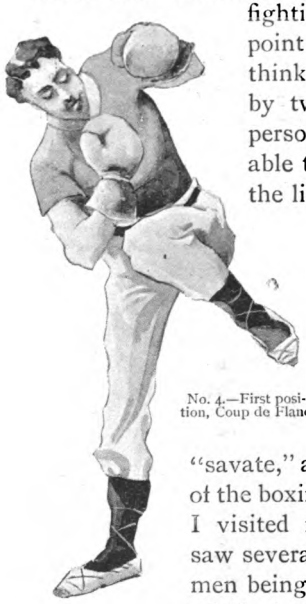
It proved so in this case, for before the American knew the battle had



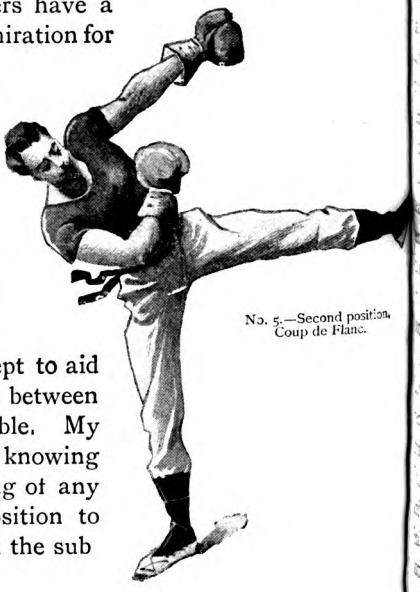
No. 2.—First kick, Coup de Savate.

begun, he received a terrific kick that simply doubled him up. He stretched himself across a bench and waited for his second wind, which was a long time in coming. I regret to have to add that the American was not satisfied with what he had received; that he again faced his foe, and this time caught the foot, and then the Frenchman, whom he flung over his head, bringing him down on the pavement with a crash that ended the fight for some days. Now, each of these students thought that the other had not fought fairly. It is hard to make an Englishman believe that a kick, however delivered, is legitimate fighting. The Frenchman's point of view is different. He thinks that if a man is set upon by two or three ruffians, the person so attacked should be able to defend himself with all the limbs he has. The use of the foot, therefore, has been brought down to a system in France, and I was astonished to find, on investigating this subject, that many English boxers have a great admiration for the French "savate," and in each of the boxing-schools I visited in Paris I saw several Englishmen being trained to wield the light fantastic toe in a way that would make Miss Lottie Collins shudder. I never use the foot in fighting, except to aid me in putting as great a distance between my opponent and myself as possible. My fists I never use at all; and, knowing absolutely nothing about the boxing of any country, I am therefore in a position to write calmly and dispassionately on the sub

No. 3.—Parry for first kick.



No. 4.—First position, Coup de Flanc.

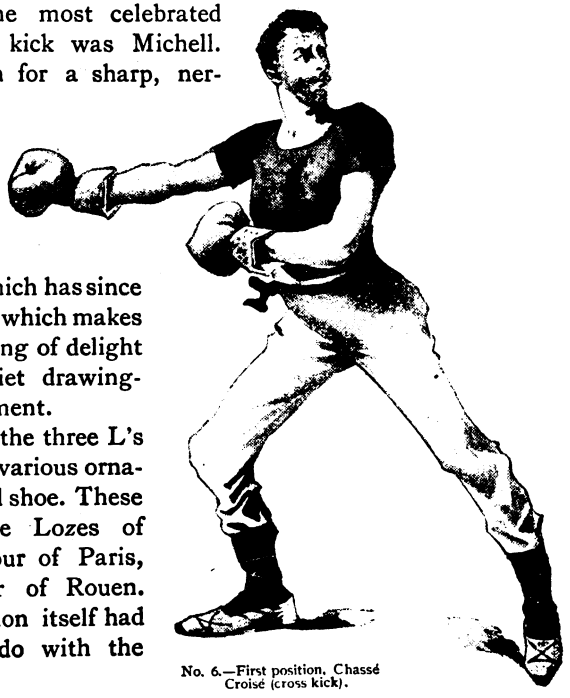


No. 5.—Second position, Coup de Flanc.

ject of the French savate. "Savate" literally means "old shoe," but in French boxing parlance it has come to mean the kick scientifically delivered. The reason of this is, doubtless, because the kick was first used in settling the quarrels of *souteneurs*, or bullies, and by the *habitués* of Barrier Balls. Their old shoes did marvellous execution, and so the name has been retained now that professors of the art of kicking have reduced it to a science. The savate is a comparatively modern method of attack, although perhaps our forefathers did some kicking when Cæsar landed, and, off and on, since that date.

It is a strange thing that the French nation, which is perhaps the only civilised nation using the foot in legitimate fighting, should have no one word that corresponds with our energetic monosyllable "kick." The nearest term they possess is the three-worded phrase *coup de pied.* Thus they are driven in characterising the play of the foot to words that relate to the foot, but which do not at all correspond with our terse word "kick." The *chausson*, meaning a sock or a light shoe, just as you choose, has practically the same significance in French boxing as "savate"; in fact, it is considered less vulgar than the latter term.

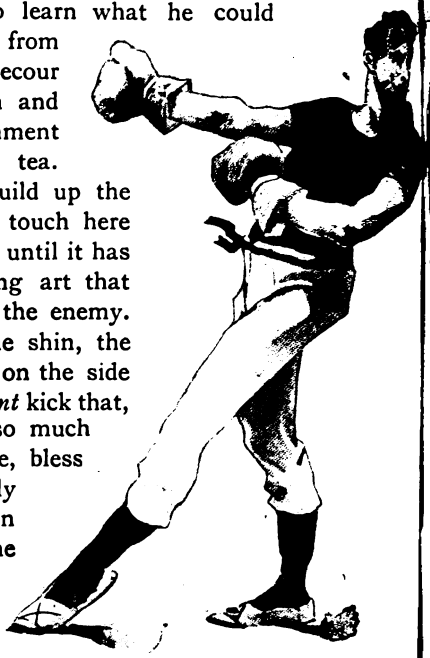
In 1830, the most celebrated master of the kick was Michell. Michell went in for a sharp, nervous, but plain kick that was eminently practical for out-door use, though lacking the airy grace which has since been added, and which makes the savate a thing of delight for a nice, quiet drawing-room entertainment.



No. 6.—First position. Chassé Croisé (cross kick).

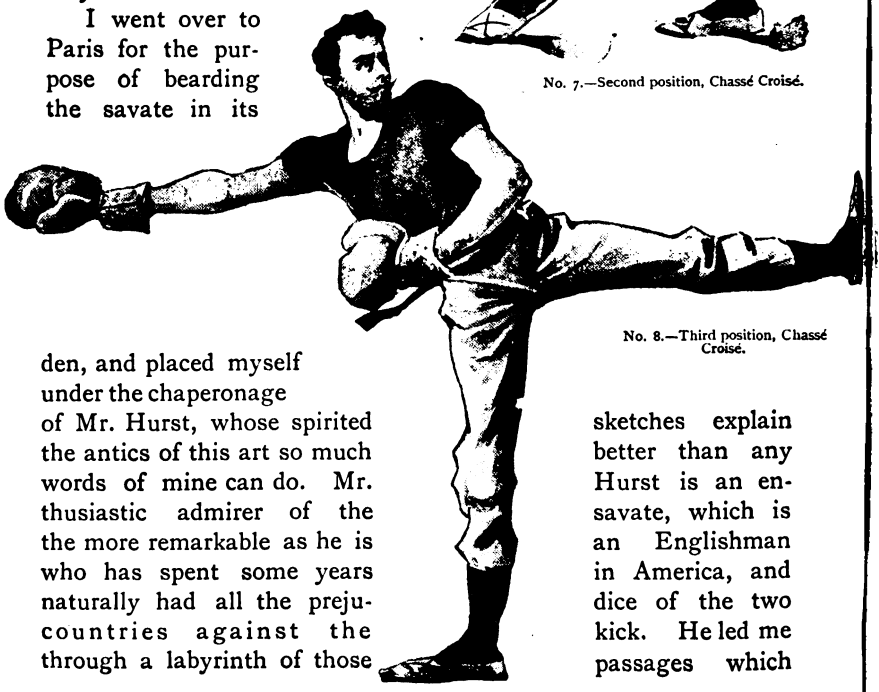
Afterwards, the three L's did much to put various ornaments on the old shoe. These professors were Lozes of Toulouse, Lecour of Paris, and Leboucher of Rouen. Staid old London itself had something to do with the

formation of the present brilliant French kick. Charles Lecour came over to England to learn what he could of English boxing, and took lessons from Swift and Adams. In London, Lecour probably pranced around his room and invented new kicks, to the astonishment of the person who brought in his tea. Thus did the French professors build up the science of savate, adding a loving touch here and a modern improvement there, until it has become a glittering and bewildering art that carries confusion into the ranks of the enemy. We have now the low kick on the shin, the heel kick on the body, the toe kick on the side of the head, and the ferocious *tournant* kick that, to misquote Shakespeare, is ever so much more blessed to give than to receive, blessing him who gives, but decidedly doing the other thing for the man who takes, landing him right into the very centre of next week.



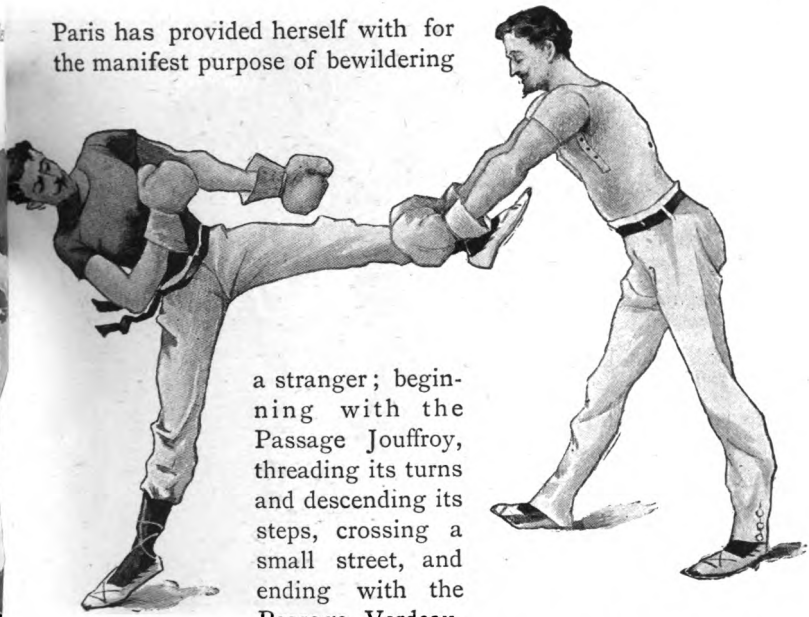
No. 7.—Second position, Chassé Croisé.

I went over to Paris for the purpose of bearding the savate in its den, and placed myself under the chaperonage of Mr. Hurst, whose spirited sketches explain the antics of this art so much better than any words of mine can do. Mr. Hurst is an enthusiastic admirer of the savate, which is the more remarkable as he is an Englishman who has spent some years in America, and naturally had all the prejudice of the two countries against the kick. He led me through a labyrinth of those passages which



No. 8.—Third position, Chassé Croisé.

Paris has provided herself with for the manifest purpose of bewildering a stranger; beginning with the Passage Jouffroy, threading its turns and descending its steps, crossing a small street, and ending with the Passage Verdeau, where, on the first floor of number something *bis*, he ushered me into the Salle d'Armes where the boxing is taught.



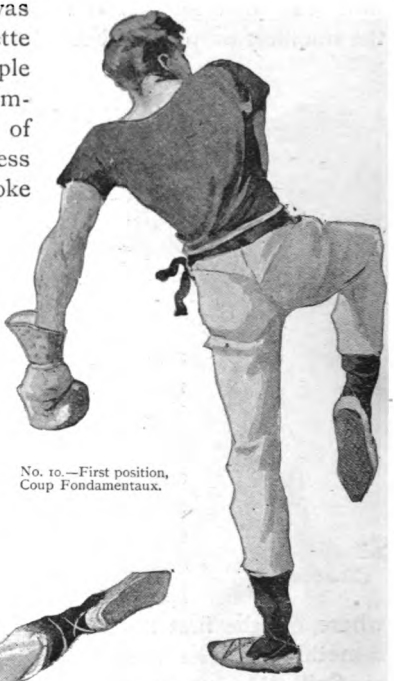
No. 9.—Running Chassé Croisé, showing method of parrying.

I was never able to find the place alone except by accident; otherwise, I would know more about the savate than I do, for I missed several appointments there. Unfortunately for me, cabmen are not allowed to drive along the passages, which is about the only thing they are prohibited from doing in Paris.

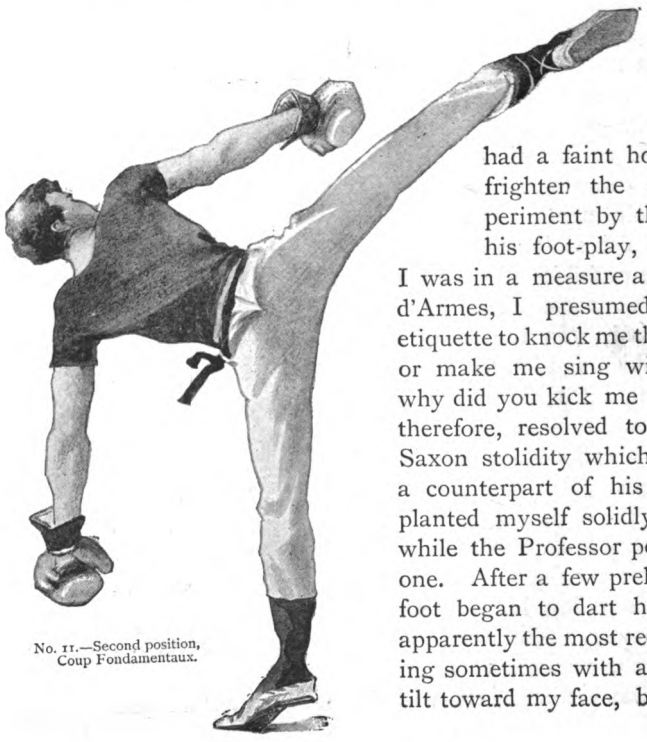
The Salle was wainscoted with rapiers, as in the daytime it was a fencing school. In the corner of the room, a small but energetic man was kicking savagely at nothing. He was delivering a low kick, guarding himself from an imaginary foe with determination and perspiration on his face, bringing to the whole mythical encounter a seriousness that made it all seem immensely ridiculous to a stranger. But that is the way perfection is attained. If anyone believes the kick is acquired without nearly as much teaching and practice as piano-playing, he is mistaken. The Professor stood over six feet tall, a powerful, well-proportioned man, who, notwithstanding his size, was as light and airy on his feet as a dancing-master. At the request of the artist, he gave me some specimens of the accuracy of aim of the savate.

The Professor was William Tell, with his foot as the weapon

instead of a bow and arrow; I was the unfortunate boy, with a cigarette in my mouth instead of an apple on my head. The Professor impressed upon me the necessity of standing rigidly still. I was to press the button—in other words, smoke the cigarette—and he would do the rest. He asked me to keep the cigarette-holder loosely between my teeth, as it was his intention to kick it from its place without ruffling the moustache, and if I held the holder too tightly there might be a dental operation added as well. I may be doing the Professor an injustice, but I suspect he had a faint hope that he would frighten the subject of the experiment by the general glitter of his foot-play, but, knowing that I was in a measure a guest of the Salle d'Armes, I presumed it would not be etiquette to knock me through the partition, or make me sing with the poet, "But why did you kick me down stairs?" I, therefore, resolved to give a sample of Saxon stolidity which would be remotely a counterpart of his Latin agility. I planted myself solidly on my two feet, while the Professor poised lightly on his one. After a few preliminary passes, the foot began to dart hither and thither in apparently the most reckless manner, coming sometimes with appalling energy full tilt toward my face, but just missing my

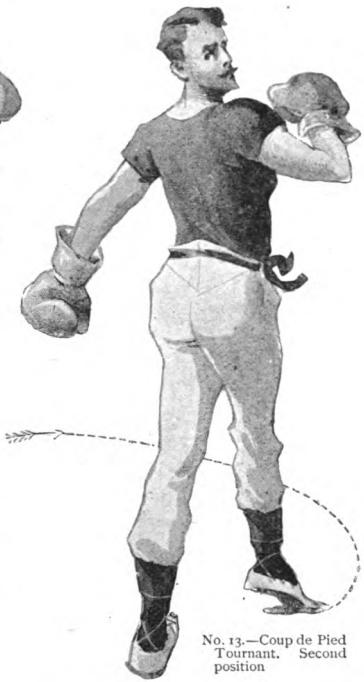


No. 10.—First position, Coup Fondamentaux.

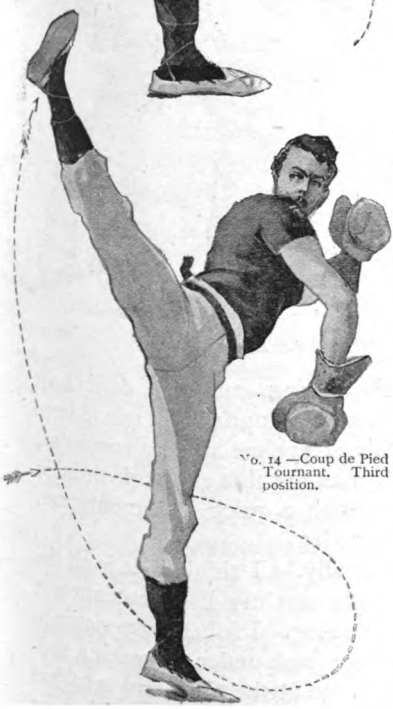


No. 11.—Second position, Coup Fondamentaux.

No. 12.—Coup de Pied Tournant First position, immediately after parry from adversary.



No. 13.—Coup de Pied Tournant. Second position



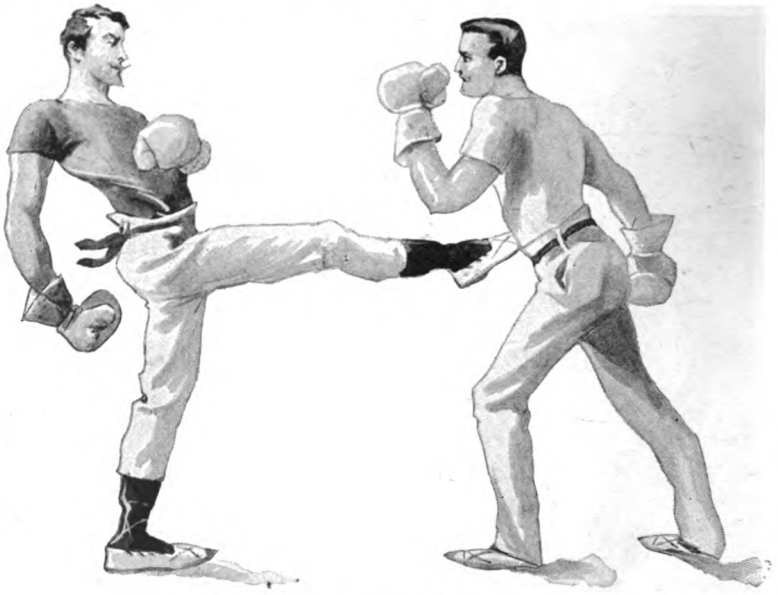
No. 14.—Coup de Pied Tournant. Third position.

cheek by the eighth of an inch; then over the head, under the chin, now on one side, now on the other, playing around my head like summer lightning. All the time, there was running through my mind, with the persistence of "Punch, brothers, punch with care," the refrain of an old negro melody of bygone days—

"There's not a foot can swing a boot
Like this here foot of mine."

The negro referred to dancing, but any dancing that I have ever seen was not in it compared with this exhibition of savate by the French Professor. All this time, the cigarette was accu-

mulating a long piece of ash on the end of it, which did not shake off because I stood so still. Once, part of the ash was blown away by a whiff of wind from the flying foot. When this brilliant and ornamental foot-play was finished, the Professor announced that he would now attend to the cigarette in three passes, each one different, and again asked me to press loosely on the holder with my teeth. First, with a straight kick, he knocked the ashes off; then, with a downward pass, he struck the cigarette from the holder to the floor; finally, with an upward whisk of the foot,



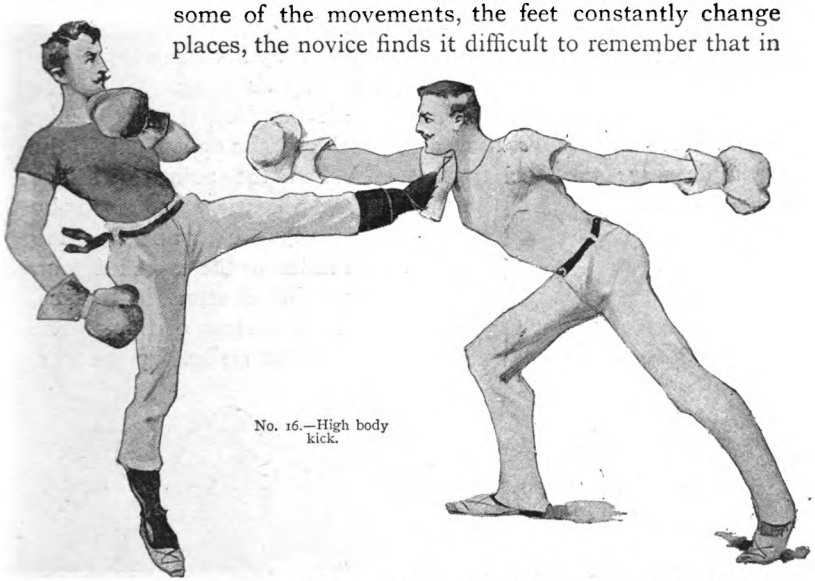
No. 15.—Belt kick (given on first signs of adversary's attack).

he sent the holder whirling to the ceiling, caught it deftly as it came down, and presented it to me with a flourish that would have done credit to Beau Nash. All this struck me as very wonderful, but I ventured to suggest that if a man did this sky work with his foot, a real opponent could easily, with a quick movement, push him over, standing, as he did, on one leg.

"Try it," said the Professor kindly. I think, if it is all the same to the reader, I will pass lightly over my disastrous attempt to upset a man who stood only on one leg. I fell an easy victim to the flying foot, which swept my own from under me with a suddenness that was a great surprise to me at the time, and a subject of sad remembrance afterwards. The shoemaker should stick to his

last. I was somewhat consoled, however, when I saw one of the most stalwart men in the school fail to push the Professor over, even when he succeeded in imprisoning the foot that was doing the kicking.

One of the first things to be learnt in attaining the art of savate, and apparently one of the most difficult to learn and to remember, is that the weight of the body must be supported by the hind leg, if the use of such a term is permissible. The foot that is furthest to the rear must always bear the weight of the body. When, as in some of the movements, the feet constantly change places, the novice finds it difficult to remember that in



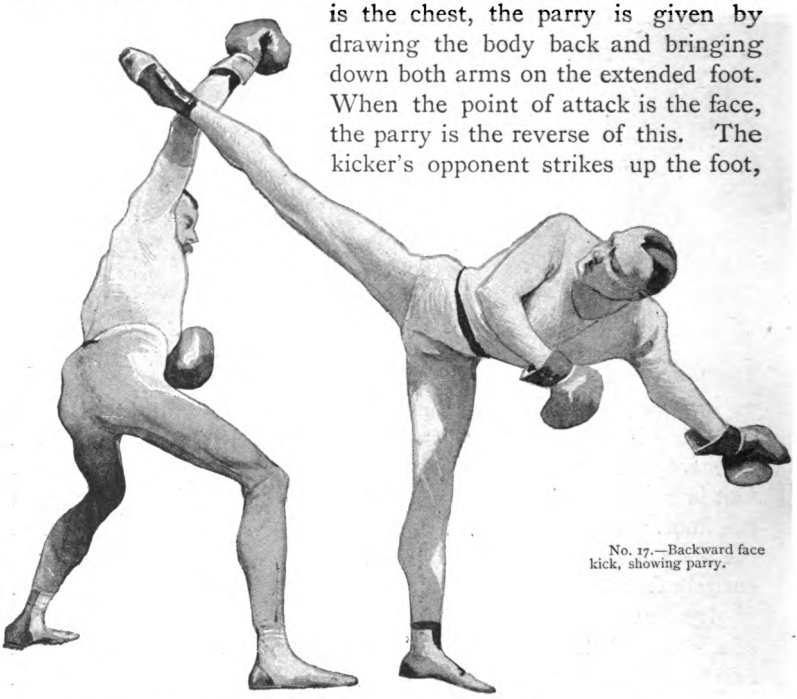
No. 16.—High body kick.

no instance is the foot furthest forward to bear any of the body's weight. If he takes the liberty of forgetting this axiom for a moment, it is gently brought to his recollection when his forward foot is swept from under him, and he finds himself in a heap on the floor. As often as the foot shifts to the rear, the weight of the body must be shifted upon it. The foot in front must be entirely free to wave about in the air or skim lightly over the floor.

Ignorance of the primary rule of the savate places the opponent of a French boxer at a terrible disadvantage. If he plants himself firmly on his two feet, one a little in advance of the other, and takes up the usual boxing attitude, he receives a side kick that knocks his forward foot from under him and brings him down, or, worse still, gets the cow kick on the shin and finds himself with a broken leg. When the pupil has had a few tumbles, and begins

to realise the importance of not resting any of his weight on his forward foot, he is initiated into the mysteries of the low kick and the parry thereof. This, the *coup de savate*, is simply an ordinary kick, with the toe pointing out and downward, aimed at the shin of the opponent, as shown in No. 2, and is parried by "bending the pregnant hinges of the knee," so as to bring the foot up and back, as shown in No. 3. There are, of course, different methods of dealing with the *coup de savate*. A man may spring forward over the extended foot and deal the kicker a right-handed blow on the head (No. 18), or he may spring back, stoop, and endeavour to throw the kicker over backward by flinging up his extended foot.

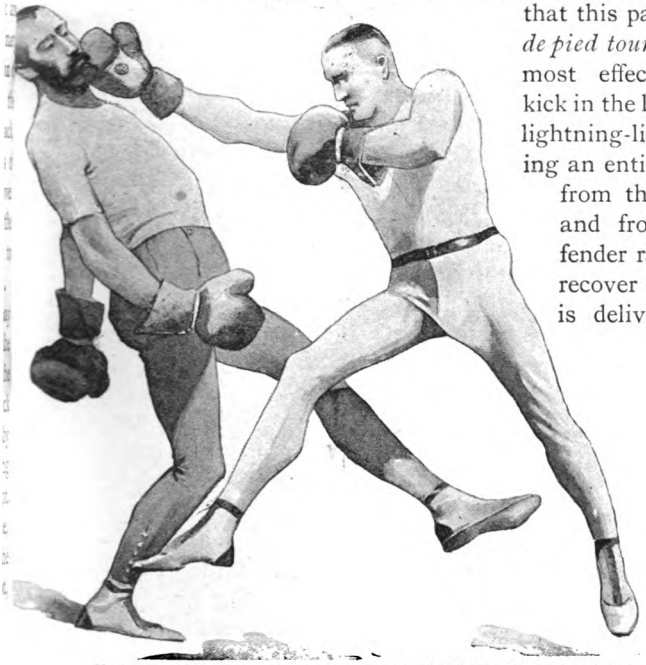
Next we come to the side kick, the *coup de flanc*. This may be a high or a low kick, and may attack the face, the side, or the chest. In the *coup de savate* the toe hits the opponent; in the *coup de flanc* the heel strikes. When the point of attack is the chest, the parry is given by drawing the body back and bringing down both arms on the extended foot. When the point of attack is the face, the parry is the reverse of this. The kicker's opponent strikes up the foot,



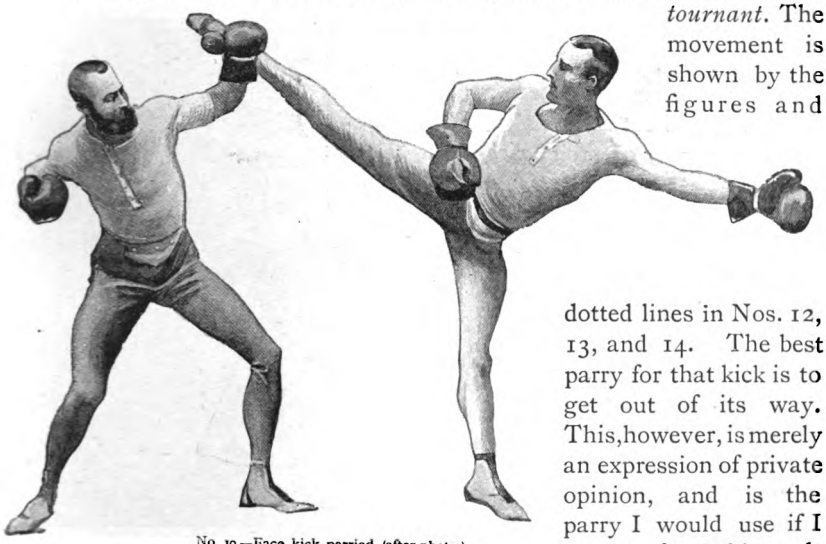
No. 17.—Backward face kick, showing parry.

and endeavours to throw the attacker over on his back. When the *coup de flanc* is aimed at the side, the foot is thrown to the right or the left by the man defending. He does this by a sweep of the arm, and it is a very dangerous parry, as will be seen when we come to consider the kick which follows. The first and second positions of the *coup de flanc* are seen in Nos. 4 and 5.

The danger of the parry to right or left arises from the fact that this parry forces the *coup de pied tournant*, probably the most effective and terrible kick in the list. It comes with lightning-like rapidity, requiring an entirely different parry from the one just given, and from which the defender rarely gets time to recover before the *tournant* is delivered with terrific force. In fact, the first kick is often given for the purpose of having the second forced by the parry of the first. When the defender flings the attacker's foot to the right or left, the latter takes the momentum thus given, whirls around like a flash, and delivers the *coup de pied tournant*. The movement is shown by the figures and dotted lines in Nos. 12, 13, and 14. The best parry for that kick is to get out of its way. This, however, is merely an expression of private opinion, and is the parry I would use if I were confronted by such



No. 18.—Coup de Savate parried, and returned with right-hand blow (after photo.)



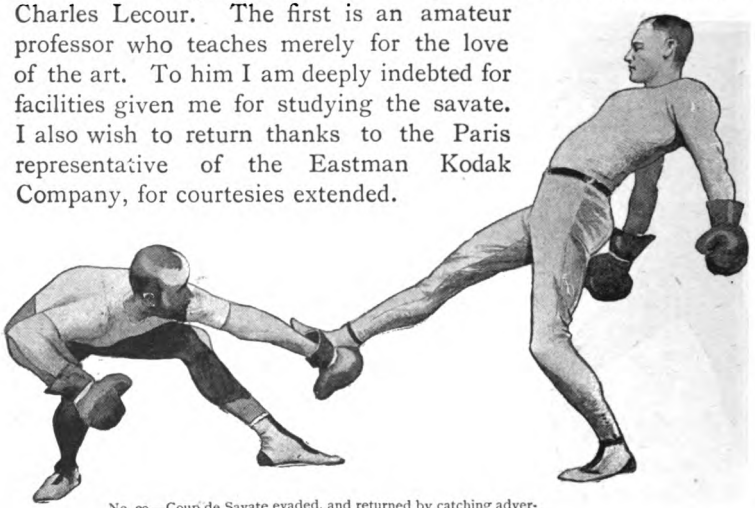
No. 19.—Face kick parried (after photo.)

a kick. The person attacked parries either by the upward or downward sweep of the arms, depending on whether the kick is delivered at the face or at the chest.

The *chassé croisé*, or cross kick, is another vicious specimen of the savate. It is a heel kick, and is delivered with a rush, thus having the momentum and weight of the body behind it. The three positions are shown in Nos. 6, 7, and 8. It is parried by drawing back the body, and bringing down the two hands on the foot (No. 9). The *coup du vache*, or cow kick, is another that has the momentum and weight of the body behind it. It is a sort of a hop and a kick, and is used when you rush at an opponent. The cow kick is given in two ways, first by quickly replacing the front foot by the rear foot, and kicking out with the foremost foot, so that the heel strikes the enemy. Second, *en croisant*, by bringing the rear foot across the other, and then kicking out.

The *coup fondamentaux* is an ornamental kick of little real use in actual fighting. This is the kick that plays around the head and face, that lightly taps the blushing cheek, and playfully pats the top of the cranium. The two positions are shown in Nos. 10 and 11. Nos. 15 and 16 show the belt kick and the high body kick. No. 17 shows the backward side face kick and the parry, while No. 19 is a striking picture (as they all are) of front side face kick and parry.

The present representative professors of the savate in Paris are Messrs. O. Quillier; Charlemont, jr.; and Leclerc, successor of Charles Lecour. The first is an amateur professor who teaches merely for the love of the art. To him I am deeply indebted for facilities given me for studying the savate. I also wish to return thanks to the Paris representative of the Eastman Kodak Company, for courtesies extended.



No. 20.—Coup de Savate evaded, and returned by catching adversary's foot, endeavouring to throw backwards (after photo.)

Love
Behold what marvels Love can do!
He makes one mantle serve for two,
Makes two fond mortals to believe
In charms which none else can perceive
For, having stolen half their brains,
But half their common sense remains
So, to repair the mischief done,
He joins the two, and makes them one.
AMOR OMNIA VINCIT

Novel Notes.

By Jerome K. Jerome.

Illustrations by J. Gülich and Hal Hurst.

"I HURRIEDLY FOLD UP THE PAPER AND PUT IT AWAY."

V.

BROWN and MacShaugnassy came down together on the Saturday afternoon; and, as soon as they had dried themselves, and changed their clothes (for some of mine), and had had some tea, we settled down to work.

Jephson had written that he would not be able to be with us until late in the evening, and Brown proposed that we should occupy ourselves until his arrival with plots.

"Let each of us," said he, "sit down and sketch out a plot. Then, afterwards, we can compare them, and select the best."

This we proceeded to do. The plots themselves I forget; but I remember that at the subsequent judging each man selected his own, and became so indignant at the bitter criticism to which it was subjected by the other two, that he tore it up; and, for the next half-hour, we sat and smoked in silence.

There was a time, when I was very young, when I yearned to know other people's opinion of me and all my works; now, my chief aim is to avoid hearing it. In those days, had anyone told me there was half a line about myself in a newspaper, I should have tramped London to obtain that publication. Now, when I see a column headed with my name, I hurriedly fold up the paper and put it away from me, subduing my natural curiosity to read it by saying to myself, "Why should you? It will only upset you for the day."

In my cubhood, I possessed a friend. Other friends have come into my life since—very dear and precious friends—but they have none of them been to me quite what this friend was. Because he was my first friend, and we lived together in a world that was much bigger than this world—more full of joy and of

grief; and, in that world, we loved and hated deeper than we love and hate in this smaller world that I have come to dwell in since.

He also had the very young man's craving to be criticised, and we made it our custom to oblige each other. We did not know then that what we meant, when we asked for "criticism," was appreciative encouragement. We thought that we were strong —one does at the beginning of the battle—and that we could bear to hear the truth about ourselves.

"WHEN ONE OF US HAD WRITTEN ANYTHING, HE WOULD READ IT TO THE OTHER."

Accordingly, each one pointed out to the other one his errors, and this task kept us both so busy that we had never time to say a word of praise to one another. That we each had a high opinion of the other's talents I am convinced, but our heads were full of silly saws. We said to ourselves—"There are many who will praise a man; it is only his friend who will tell him of his faults." Also, we said —"No man sees his own shortcomings, but when these are pointed out to him by another he is grateful, and proceeds to mend them."

As we came to know the world better, we learnt the fallacy of these ideas. But then it was too late, for the mischief had been done.

When one of us had written anything, he would read it to the other, and when he had finished he would say, "Now, tell me what you think of it—frankly and as a friend."

Those were his words. But his thoughts, though he may not have known them, were:

"Tell me it is clever and good, my friend, even if you do not think so. The world is very cruel to those that have not yet conquered it, and, though we keep a careless face, our young hearts are scored with wrinkles. Often we grow weary and faint-hearted. Is it not so, my friend? No one has faith in us, and in our dark hours we doubt ourselves. You are my comrade. You know what of myself I have put into this thing that to others will be but an idle half-hour's reading. Tell me it is good, my friend. Put a little heart into me, I pray you."

But the other, full of the lust of criticism, which is civilisation's substitute for cruelty, would answer more in frankness than in friendship. Then he who had written would flush angrily, and scornful words would pass.

One evening, he read me a play he had written. There was much that was good in it, but there were also faults (there are in some plays), and these I seized upon and made merry over. I could hardly have dealt out to the piece more unnecessary bitterness had I been a professional critic.

"AND FLUNG IT IN THE FIRE."

As soon as I paused from my sport, he rose, and, taking his manuscript from the table, tore it in two, and flung it in the fire—he was but a very young man, you must remember—and then, standing before me with a white face, he told me, unsolicited, his opinion of me and of my art. After which double event, it is perhaps needless to say that we parted in hot anger.

I did not see him again for years. The streets of life are very crowded, and if we loose each other's hands we are soon hustled far apart. When I did next meet him it was by accident.

I had left the Whitehall Rooms after a public dinner, and, glad of the cool night air, was strolling home by the Embankment. A man, slouching along under the trees, paused as I overtook him.

"You couldn't oblige me with a light, could you, guvenor?" he said. The voice sounded strange, coming from the figure that it did.

I struck a match, and held it out to him, shaded by my hands. As the faint light illumined his face, I started back, and let the match fall:

"Harry!"

He answered with a short, dry laugh. "I didn't know it was you," he said, "or I shouldn't have stopped you."

"How has it come to this, old fellow?" I asked, laying my hand upon his shoulder. His coat was unpleasantly greasy, and I drew my hand away again as quickly as I could, and tried to wipe it covertly upon my handkerchief.

"'DO I LOOK LIKE A MAN YOU COULD DO ANYTHING FOR?'"

"Oh, it's a long story," he answered, carelessly, "and too conventional to be worth telling. Some of us go up, you know. Some of us go down. You're doing pretty well, I hear."

"I suppose so," I replied; "I've climbed a few feet up a greasy pole, and am trying to stick there. But never mind me, it is of you I want to talk. Can't I do anything for you, Harry?"

We were passing under a gas-lamp at the moment. He thrust his face forward close to mine, and the light fell full and pitilessly upon it.

"Do I look like a man you could do anything for?" he said.

We walked on in silence side by side, I casting about for words that might seize hold of him.

"You needn't worry about me," he continued after a while, "I'm comfortable enough. We take life easily down here where I am. We don't have any disappointments."

"Why did you give up like a weak coward?" I burst out angrily. "You had talent. You would have won with ordinary perseverance."

"Maybe," he replied, in the same even tone of indifference. "I suppose I hadn't the grit. I think if somebody had believed

in me it might have helped me. But nobody did, and at last I lost belief in myself. And when a man loses that, he's like a balloon with the gas let out."

I listened to his words in indignation and astonishment. "Nobody believed in you!" I repeated. "Why, *I* always believed in you, you know that. I——"

Then I paused, remembering our "candid criticism" of one another.

"Did you?" he replied quietly, "I never heard you say so. Good night."

"I HASTENED AFTER HIM, CALLING HIM BY NAME."

In the course of our Strand-ward walking we had come to the neighbourhood of the Savoy, and, as he spoke, he disappeared down one of the dark turnings thereabouts.

I hastened after him, calling him by name, but though I heard his quick steps before me for a little way, they were soon swallowed up in the sound of other steps, and, when I reached the square in which the chapel stands, I had lost all trace of him.

A policeman was standing by the churchyard railings, and of him I made enquiries.

"What sort of a gent was he, sir?" questioned the man.

"A tall, thin gentleman, very shabbily dressed—might be mistaken for a tramp."

"Ah, sir, there's a good many of that sort living in this town," replied he. "I am afraid you'll have some difficulty in finding him."

Thus for a second time had I heard his footsteps die away, knowing I should never listen for their drawing near again.

I wondered as I walked on—I have wondered before and since—whether Art, even with a capital A, is quite worth all the suffering that is inflicted in her behalf—whether she and we are better for all the scorning and the sneering, all the envying and the hating that is done in her name.

Jephson arrived about nine o'clock in the ferry-boat. We were made acquainted with this fact by having our heads bumped against the sides of the saloon.

Somebody or other always had their head bumped whenever the ferry-boat arrived. It was a heavy and cumbersome machine, and the ferry-boy was not a good punter. He admitted this frankly,

which was creditable of him. But he made no attempt to improve himself; that is, where he was wrong. His method was to arrange the punt before starting in a line with the point towards which he wished to proceed, and then to push hard, without ever looking behind him, until something suddenly stopped him. This was sometimes the bank, sometimes another boat, occasionally a steamer, from six to a dozen times a day our riparian dwelling. That he never succeeded in staving the boat in, speaks highly for the man who built her.

"BOXED HIS EARS."

One day he came down upon us with a tremendous crash. Amenda was walking down the passage at the moment, and the result to her was that she received a violent blow first on the left side of her head and then on the right.

She was accustomed to accept one bump as a matter of course, and to regard it as an intimation from the boy that he had come; but this double knock annoyed her: so much "style" was out of place in a mere ferry-boy. Accordingly, she went out to him in a state of high indignation.

"What do you think you are?" she cried, balancing accounts by boxing his ears first on one side and then on the other. "A torpedo! What are you doing here at all? What do you want?"

"STRUGGLED UP."

"I don't want nothin'," explained the boy, rubbing his head; "I've brought a gent down."

"A gent," said Amenda, looking round, but seeing no one. "What gent?"

"A stout gent in a straw 'at," answered the boy, staring round him bewilderedly.

"Well, where is he?" asked Amenda.

"I dunno," replied the boy, in an awed voice; "'e was a standin' there, at the other end of the punt, a smokin' a cigar."

Just then a head appeared above the water, and a spent but infuriated swimmer struggled up between the houseboat and the bank.

L

"Oh, there 'e is!" cried the boy delightedly, evidently much relieved in his mind at this satisfactory solution of the mystery; "'e must ha' tumbled off the punt."

"You're quite right, my lad, that's just what he did do, and there's your fee for assisting him to do it." Saying which, my dripping friend, who had now scrambled upon deck, leant over, and following Amenda's excellent example, expressed his feelings upon the boy's head.

There was one comforting reflection about the transaction as a whole, and that was that the ferry-boy had at last received a fit and proper reward for his services. I had often felt inclined to give him something of the same sort myself. I think he was, without exception, the most clumsy and stupid boy I have ever come across; and that is saying a good deal.

His mother undertook that for three and sixpence a week he should "make himself generally useful" to us for a couple of hours every morning.

Those were the old lady's very words, and I repeated them to Amenda when I introduced the boy to her.

"This is James, Amenda," I said; "he will come down here every morning at seven, and bring us our milk and the letters, and from then till nine, he will make himself generally useful."

Amenda took stock of him:

"It will be a change of occupation for him, sir, I should say, by the look of him," she remarked.

After that, whenever some more than usually stirring crash or blood-curdling bump would cause us to leap from our seats and cry: "What on earth has happened?" Amenda would reply: "Oh, it's only James, mum, making himself generally useful."

Whatever he lifted he let fall; whatever he touched he upset; whatever he came near—that was not a fixture—he knocked over; if it was a fixture, it knocked him over. This was not carelessness: it seemed to be a natural gift. Never in his life, I am convinced, had he carried a bucketful of anything anywhere without tumbling over it before he got there. One of his duties was to water the flowers on the roof. Fortunately—for the flowers—Nature, that summer, stood drinks with a lavishness sufficient to satisfy the most confirmed vegetable toper: otherwise every plant on our boat would have died from drought. Never one drop of water did they receive from him. He was for ever taking them water, but he never arrived there with it. As a rule he upset the pail before he got it on to the boat at all, and this was

the best thing that could happen, because then the water simply went back into the river, and did no harm to anyone. Sometimes, however, he would succeed in landing it, and then the chances were that he would spill it over the deck or into the passage. Now and again, he would get halfway up the ladder before the accident occurred. Twice he nearly reached the top; and once he actually did gain the roof. What happened up there on that memorable occasion will never be known. The boy himself, when picked up, could explain nothing. It is supposed that he lost his head with the pride of the achievement, and essayed feats that neither his previous training nor his natural abilities justified him in attempting. However that may be, the fact remains that the main body of the water came down the kitchen chimney; and that the boy and the empty pail arrived together on deck before they knew they had started.

"NOW AND AGAIN, HE WOULD GET HALFWAY UP THE LADDER."

When he could find nothing else to damage, he would go out of his way to upset himself. He could not be sure of stepping from his own punt on to the boat with safety. As often as not, he would catch his foot in the chain or the punt-pole, and arrive on his chest.

Amenda used to condole with him. "Your mother ought to be ashamed of herself," I heard her telling him one morning; "she could never have taught you to walk. What you want is a go-cart."

He was a willing lad, but his stupidity was supernatural. A comet appeared in the sky that year, and everybody was talking about it. One day he said to me:

"There's a comet coming, ain't there, sir?" He talked about the thing as though it were a circus.

"Coming!" I answered, "it's come. Haven't you seen it yet?"

"No, sir."

"Oh, well, you have a look for it to-night. It's worth seeing."

"Yees, sir, I should like to see it. It's got a tail, ain't it, sir?"

"Yes, a very fine tail."

"Yees, sir; they said it 'ad a tail. Where do you go to see it, sir?"

"Go! You don't want to go anywhere. You'll see it in your own garden at ten o'clock."

He thanked me, and, tumbling over a sack of potatoes, plunged head foremost into his punt and departed.

Next morning, I asked him if he had seen the comet.

"No, sir, I couldn't see it anywhere."

"Did you look?"

"Yees, sir. I looked a long time."

"How on earth did you manage to miss it then?" I exclaimed; "it was a clear enough night. Where did you look?"

LOOKING FOR A COMET.

"In our garden, sir. Where you told me."

"Whereabouts in the garden?" chimed in Amenda, who happened to be standing by; "under the gooseberry bushes?"

"Yees—everywhere."

That is what he had done: he had taken the stable lantern and searched the garden for it.

But the day when he broke even his own record for foolishness happened about three weeks later. MacShaugnassy was staying with us at the time, and on the Friday evening he mixed us a salad, according to a recipe given him by his aunt. On the Saturday morning, everybody was, of course, very ill. Everybody always is very ill after partaking of any dish prepared by MacShaugnassy. Some people attempt to explain this fact by talking glibly of "cause and effect." MacShaugnassy maintains that it is simply coincidence.

"How do you know," he says, "that you wouldn't have been ill if you hadn't eaten any? You're queer enough now, anyone can see, and I'm very sorry for you; but, for all that you can tell, if you hadn't eaten any of that stuff, you might have been very much worse—perhaps dead. In all probability, it has saved your life." And for the rest of the day, he assumes towards you the attitude of a man who has dragged you from the grave.

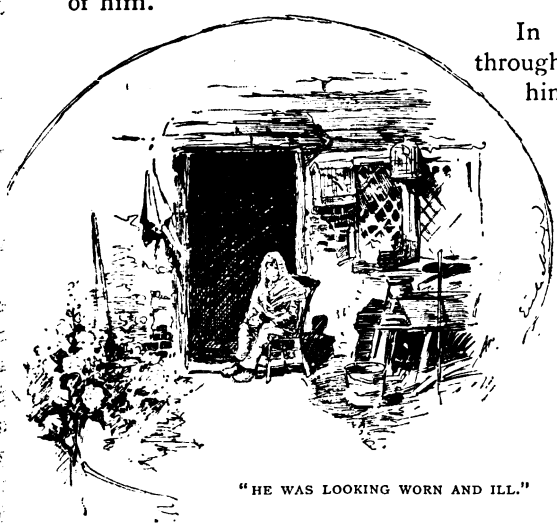
The moment Jimmy arrived I seized hold of him.

"Jimmy," I said, "you must rush off to the chemist's immediately. Don't stop for anything. Tell him to give you some-

thing for colic—the result of vegetable poisoning. It must be something very strong, and enough for four. Don't forget, something to counteract the effects of vegetable poisoning. Hurry up, or it may be too late."

My excitement communicated itself to the boy. He tumbled back into his punt and pushed off vigorously. I watched him land, and disappear in the direction of the village.

Half-an-hour passed, but Jimmy did not reappear. No one felt sufficiently energetic to go after him. We had only just strength enough to sit still and feebly abuse him. At the end of an hour, we were all feeling very much better. At the end of an hour and a-half, we were glad he had not returned when he ought to have, and were only curious as to what had become of him.



"HE WAS LOOKING WORN AND ILL."

In the evening, strolling through the village, we saw him sitting by the open door of his mother's cottage, with a shawl wrapped round him. He was looking worn and ill.

"Why Jimmy," I said, "what's the matter? Why didn't you come back this morning?"

"I couldn't, sir," Jimmy answered, "I was so queer. Mother made me go to bed."

"You seemed all right in the morning," I said; "what's made you queer?"

"What Mr. Jones give me, sir: it upset me awful."

A light broke in upon me.

"What did you say, Jimmy, when you got to Mr. Jones's shop?" I asked.

"I told 'im what you said, sir, that 'e was to give me something to counteract the effects of vegetable poisoning. And that it was to be very strong, and enough for four."

"And what did he say?"

"'E said that was only your nonsense, sir, and that I'd better

have enough for one to begin with; and then 'e asked me if I'd been eating green apples again."

"And you told him?"

"Yees, sir, I told 'im I'd 'ad a few, and 'e said it served me right, and that 'e 'oped it would be a warning to me. And then 'e put something fizzy in a glass and told me to drink it."

"And you drank it?"

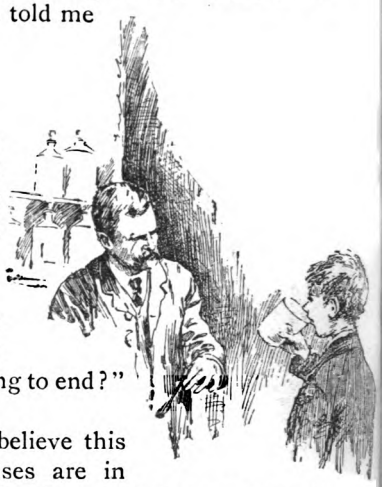
"Yees, sir."

"It never occurred to you, Jimmy, that there was nothing the matter with you—that you were never feeling better in your life, and that you did not require any medicine?"

"No, sir."

"Did one single scintilla of thought of any kind occur to you in connection with the matter, Jimmy, from beginning to end?"

"No, sir."



"'TOLD ME TO DRINK IT.'"

People who never met Jimmy disbelieve this story. They argue that its premises are in disaccord with the known laws governing human nature, that its details do not square with the average of probability. People who have seen and conversed with Jimmy accept it with simple faith.

There are many other anecdotes concerning Jimmy that I could relate, but the fear lest they might not be believed debars me.

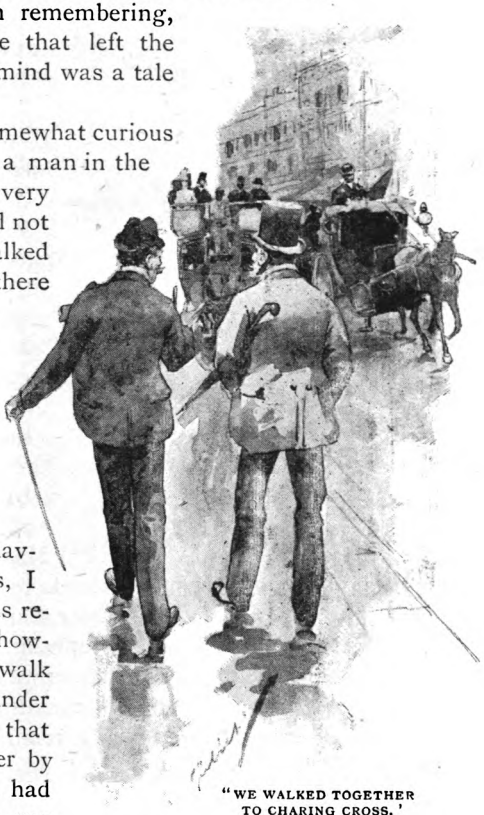
The advent of Jephson—which I trust the reader has not entirely forgotten. It was, he may remember, this episode that started me talking about Jimmy—cheered us up considerably. Jephson was always at his best when all other things were at their worst. It was not that he struggled in Mark Tapley fashion to appear most cheerful when most depressed; it was that petty misfortunes and mishaps genuinely amused and inspirited him. Most of us can recall our unpleasant experiences with amused affection; Jephson possessed the robuster philosophy that enabled him to enjoy his during their actual progress. He arrived drenched to the skin, chuckling hugely at the idea of having come down on a visit to a houseboat in such weather.

Under his warming influence, the hard lines on our faces thawed, and by supper time we were, as all Englishmen and women who wish to enjoy life should be, independent of the weather.

Later on, as if disheartened by our indifference, the rain ceased, and we took our chairs out on the deck, and sat watching the lightning, which still played incessantly. Then, not unnaturally, the talk drifted into a sombre channel, and we began recounting stories, dealing with the gloomy and mysterious side of life.

Some of these were worth remembering, and some were not. The one that left the strongest impression on my mind was a tale that Jephson told us.

I had just been relating a somewhat curious experience of my own. I met a man in the Strand one day that I knew very well, as I thought, though I had not seen him for years. We walked together to Charing Cross, and there we shook hands and parted. Next morning, I spoke of this meeting to a mutual friend, and then I learnt, for the first time, that the man had died six months before.



"WE WALKED TOGETHER TO CHARING CROSS."

The natural inference was that I had mistaken one man for another, an error that, not having a good memory for faces, I frequently fall into. What was remarkable about the matter, however, was that throughout our walk I had conversed with the man under the impression that he was that other dead man, and, whether by coincidence or not, his replies had never once suggested to me my mistake.

As soon as I finished speaking, Jephson, who had been listening very thoughtfully, asked me if I believed in spiritualism "to its fullest extent."

"That is rather a large question," I answered. "What do you mean by 'spiritualism to its fullest extent'?"

"Well, do you believe that the spirits of the dead have not only the power of re-visiting this earth at their will, but that, when here, they have the power of action, or rather, of exciting to

action. Let me put a definite case. A spiritualist friend of mine, a sensible and by no means imaginative man, once told me that a table, through the medium of which the spirit of a friend had been in the habit of communicating with him, came slowly across the room towards him, of its own accord, one night as he sat alone, and pinioned him against the wall. Now can any of you believe that, or can't you?"

"PINIONED HIM AGAINST THE WALL."

"I could," Brown took it upon himself to reply; "but, before doing so, I should wish for an introduction to the friend who told you the story. Speaking generally," he continued, "it seems to me that the difference between what we call the natural and the supernatural is merely the difference between frequency and rarity of occurrence. Having regard to the phenomena we are compelled to admit, I think it illogical to disbelieve anything that we are not able to disprove."

"For my part," remarked MacShaugnassy, "I can believe in the ability of our spirit friends to give the quaint entertainments credited to them much easier than I can in their desire to do so."

"You mean," added Jephson, "that you cannot understand why a spirit, not compelled as we are by the exigencies of society, should care to spend its evenings carrying on a laboured and childish conversation with a room full of abnormally uninteresting people."

"That is precisely what I cannot understand," MacShaugnassy agreed.

"Nor I, either," said Jephson. "But I was thinking of something very different altogether. Suppose a man died with the dearest wish of his heart unfulfilled, do you believe that his spirit might have power to return to earth and complete the interrupted work?"

"Well," answered MacShaugnassy, "if one admits the possibility of spirits retaining any interest in the affairs of this world at all, it is certainly more reasonable to imagine them engaged upon

a task such as you suggest, than to believe that they occupy themselves with the performance of mere drawing-room tricks. But what are you leading up to?"

"Why to this," replied Jephson, seating himself straddle-legged across his chair, and leaning his arms upon the back. "I was told a story this morning at the hospital by an old French doctor. The actual facts are few and simple; all that is known can be read in the Paris police records of forty-two years ago.

"'TO THIS,' REPLIED JEPHSON."

"The most important part of the case, however, is the part that is not known, and that never will be known.

"The story begins with a great wrong done by one man unto another man. What the wrong was I do not know. I am inclined to think, however, it was connected with a woman. I think that because he who had been wronged hated him who had wronged with a hate such as does not often burn in a man's brain unless it be fanned by the memory of a woman's breath.

"Still that is only conjecture, and the point is immaterial. The man who had done the wrong fled, and the other man followed him. It became a point to point race, the first man having the advantage of a day's start. The course was the whole world, and the stakes were the first man's life.

"Travellers were few and far between in those days, and this made the trail easy to follow. The first man, never knowing how far or how near the other was behind him, and hoping now and again that he might have baffled him, would rest for a while. The second man, knowing always just how far the first one was before him, never paused, and thus each day the man who was spurred by Hate drew nearer to the man who was spurred by Fear.

"At this town the answer to the never-varied question would be;

"'At seven o'clock last evening, M'sieur.'

"'Seven—ah; eighteen hours. Give me something to eat, quick, while the horses are being put to.'

"At the next the calculation would be sixteen hours.

"Passing a lonely châlet, Monsieur puts his head out of the window:

"'How long since a carriage passed this way, with a tall, fair man inside?'

"MONSIEUR PUTS HIS HEAD OUT OF THE WINDOW."

"'Such a one passed early this morning, M'sieur.'

"'Thanks, drive on, a hundred francs apiece if you are through the pass before daybreak.'

"'And what for dead horses, M'sieur?'

"'Twice their value when living.'

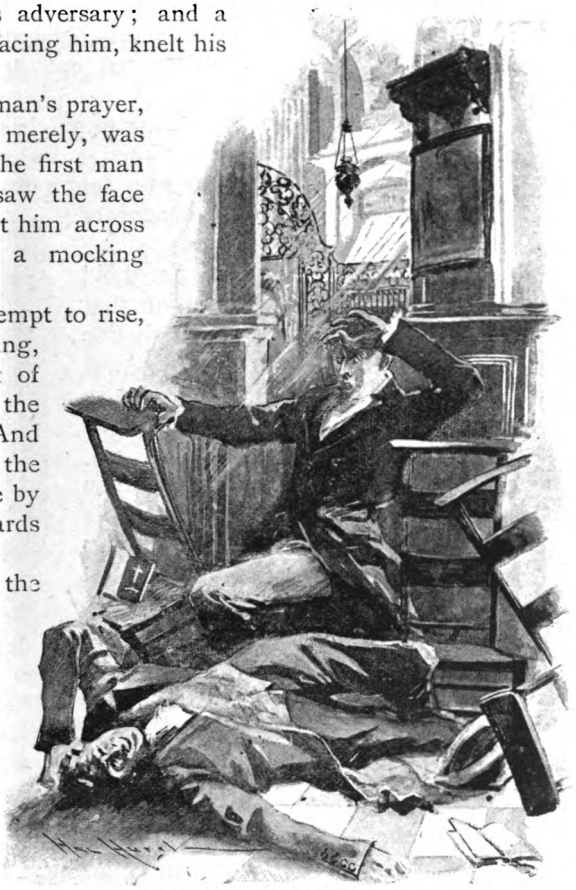
"One day the man who was ridden by Fear looked up, and saw

before him the open door of a cathedral, and, passing in, knelt down and prayed. He prayed long and fervently, for men, when they are in sore straits, clutch eagerly at the straws of faith. He prayed that he might be forgiven his sin, and, more important still, that he might be pardoned the consequences of his sin, and be delivered from his adversary; and a few chairs from him, facing him, knelt his enemy, praying also.

"But the second man's prayer, being a thanksgiving merely, was short, so that when the first man raised his eyes, he saw the face of his enemy gazing at him across the chair tops, with a mocking smile upon it.

"He made no attempt to rise, but remained kneeling, fascinated by the look of joy that shone out of the other man's eyes. And the other man moved the high-backed chairs one by one, and came towards him softly.

"Then, just as the man who had been wronged stood beside the man who had wronged him, full of gladness that his opportunity had come, there burst from the cathedral tower a sudden clash of bells, and the man whose opportunity had come broke his heart and fell back dead, with that mocking smile of his still playing round his mouth.



"AND SO HE LAY THERE."

"And so he lay there.

"Then the man who had done the wrong rose up and passed out, praising God.

"What became of the body of the other man is not known. It

was the body of a stranger who had died suddenly in the cathedral. There was none to identify it, none to claim it.

"Years passed away, and the survivor in the tragedy became a worthy and useful citizen, and a noted man of science.

"In his laboratory were many objects necessary to him in his researches, and prominent among them, stood in a certain corner, a human skeleton. It was a very old and much-mended skeleton, and one day the long-expected end arrived, and it tumbled to pieces.

"Thus it became necessary to purchase another.

"The man of science visited a dealer he well knew; a little parchment-faced old man who kept a dingy shop, where nothing was ever sold, within the shadow of the towers of Notre Dame.

"The little parchment-faced old man had just the very thing that Monsieur wanted—a singularly fine and well-proportioned 'study.' It should be sent round and set up in Monsieur's laboratory that very afternoon.

"The dealer was as good as his word. When Monsieur entered his laboratory that evening, the thing was in its place.

"Monsieur seated himself in his high-backed chair, and tried to collect his thoughts. But Monsieur's thoughts were unruly, and inclined to wander, and to wander always in one direction.

"HELD HIS LAMP UP IN FRONT OF THE THING'S GRINNING HEAD."

"Monsieur opened a large volume and commenced to read. He read of a man who had wronged another and fled from him, the other man following. Finding himself reading this, he closed the book angrily, and went and stood by the window and looked out. He saw before him the sun-pierced nave of a great cathedral, and on the stones lay a dead man with a mocking smile upon his face.

"Cursing himself for a fool, he turned away with a laugh. But his laugh was short-lived, for it seemed to him that something else in the room was laughing also. Struck suddenly still, with his

feet glued to the ground, he stood listening for awhile: then sought with starting eyes the corner from where the sound had seemed to come. But the white thing standing there was only grinning.

"Monsieur wiped the damp sweat from his head and hands, and stole out.

"For a couple of days he did not enter the room again. On the third, telling himself that his fears were those of a hysterical girl, he opened the door and went in. To shame himself, he took his lamp in his hand, and crossing over to the far corner where the skeleton stood, examined it. A set of bones bought for a hundred francs. Was he a child, to be scared by such a bogey!

"He held his lamp up in front of the thing's grinning head. The flame of the lamp flickered as though a faint breath had passed over it.

"The man explained this to himself by saying that the walls of the house were old and cracked, and that the wind might creep in anywhere. He repeated this explanation to himself as he recrossed the room, walking backwards, with his eyes fixed on the thing. When he reached his desk, he sat down and gripped the arms of his chair till his fingers turned white.

"He tried to work, but the empty sockets in that grinning head seemed to be drawing him towards them. He rose and battled with his inclination to fly screaming from the room. Glancing fearfully about him, his eye fell upon a high screen, standing before the door. He dragged it forward, and placed it between himself and the thing, so that he could not see it—nor it see him. Then he sat down again to his work. For awhile he forced himself to look at the book in front of him, but at last, unable to control himself any longer, he suffered his eyes to follow their own bent.

"It may have been an hallucination. He may have accidentally placed the screen so as to favour such an illusion. But what he saw was a bony hand coming round the corner of the screen, and, with a cry, he fell to the floor in a swoon.

"The people of the house came running in, and lifting him up, carried him out, and laid him upon his bed. As soon as he recovered, his first question was, where had they found the thing—where was it when they entered the room? and when they told him they had seen it standing where it always stood, and had gone down into the room to look again, because of his frenzied entreaties, and returned trying to hide their smiles, he listened to their talk about overwork, and the necessity for change and rest, and said they might do with him as they would.

"So for many months the laboratory door remained locked. Then there came a chill autumn evening when the man of science opened it again, and closed it behind him.

"He lighted his lamp, and gathered his instruments and books around him, and sat down before them in his high-backed chair. And the old terror returned to him.

"But this time he meant to conquer himself. His nerves were stronger now, and his brain clearer; he would fight his unreasoning fear. He crossed to the door and locked himself in, and flung the key to the other end of the room, where it fell among jars and bottles with an echoing clatter.

"Later on, his old housekeeper, going her final round, tapped at his door and wished him good night, as was her custom. She received no response, at first, and, growing nervous, tapped louder and called again; and at length an answering 'good night' came back to her.

"HIS FIRST QUESTION WAS, WHERE HAD THEY FOUND THE THING?"

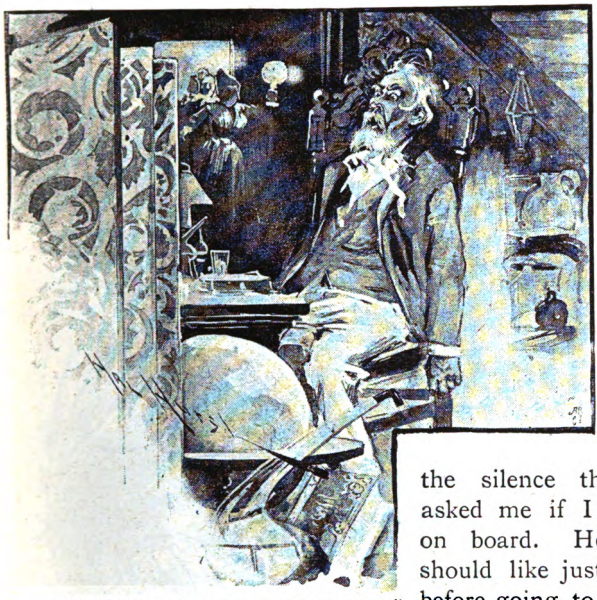
"She thought little about it at the time, but afterwards she remembered that the voice that had replied to her had been strangely grating and mechanical. Trying to describe it, she likened it to such a voice as she would imagine coming from a statue.

"Next morning his door remained still locked. It was no unusual thing for him to work all night, and far into the next day, so no one thought to be surprised. When, however, evening came, and yet he did not appear, his servants gathered outside the room and whispered, remembering what had happened once before.

"They listened, but could hear no sound. They shook the door and called to him, then beat with their fists upon the wooden panels. But still no sound came from the room.

"Becoming alarmed, they decided to burst open the door, and, after many blows, it gave way and flew back, and they crowded in.

"He sat bolt upright in his high-backed chair. They thought at first he had died in his sleep. But when they drew nearer and the light fell upon him, they saw the livid marks of bony fingers round his throat; and in his eyes there was a terror such as is not often seen in human eyes."



'BOLT UPRIGHT IN HIS HIGH-BACKED CHAIR."

Brown was the first to break the silence that followed. He asked me if I had any brandy on board. He said he felt he should like just a nip of brandy before going to bed. That is one of the chief charms of Jephson's stories: they always make you feel you want a little brandy.

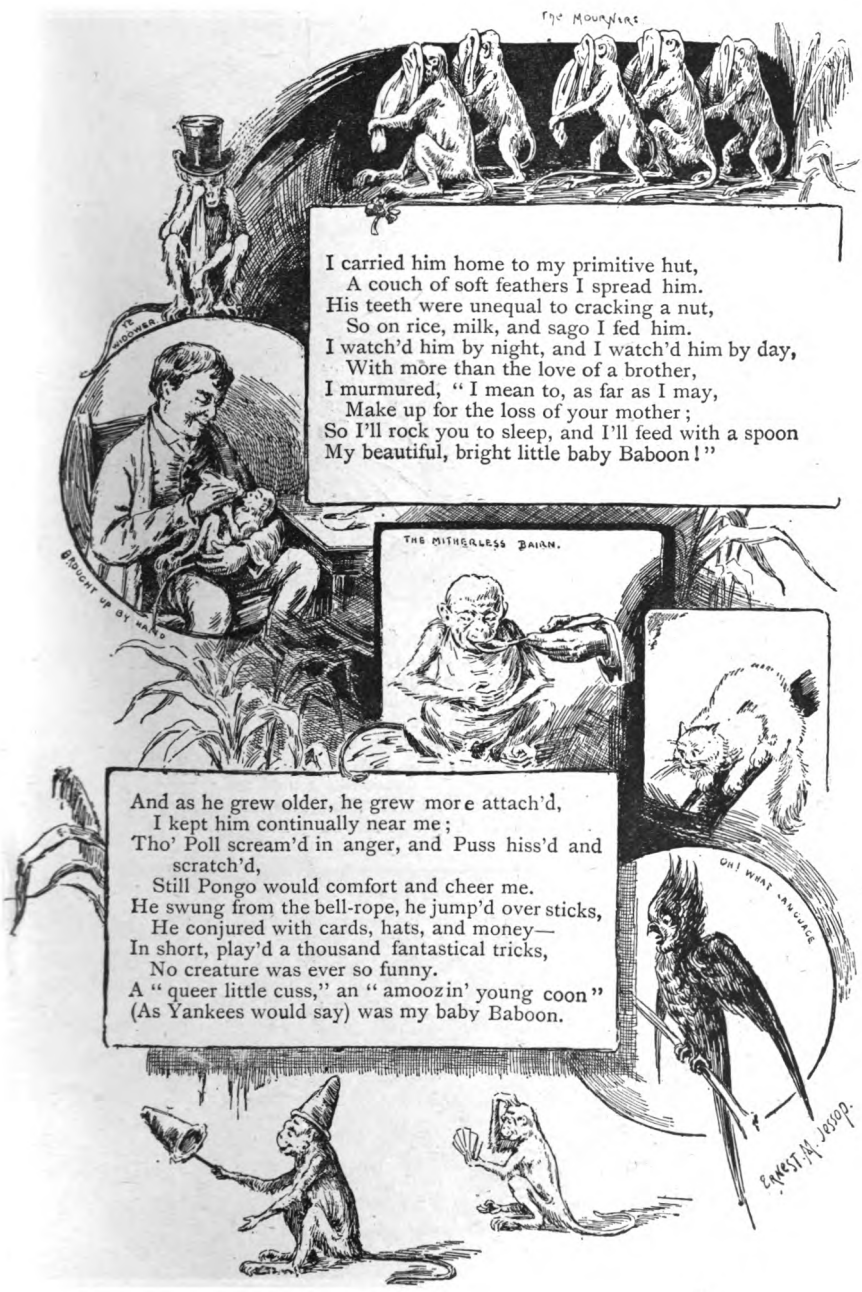
The Baby Baboon: An African Idyl.

By Walter Parke.

Illustrations by Ernest M. Jessop.

'Twas long, long ago, in the days of my youth,
When I was a dashing young Johnnie,
Hard-working, and famous for telling the truth,
They made me Sub-Consul at Bonny;
I lived in a residence built of bamboo,
With tropical creepers around it;
I kept a white cat and a black cockatoo,
And very delightful I found it;
But Fate had ordained I should own very soon
A sweeter companion—a baby Baboon.

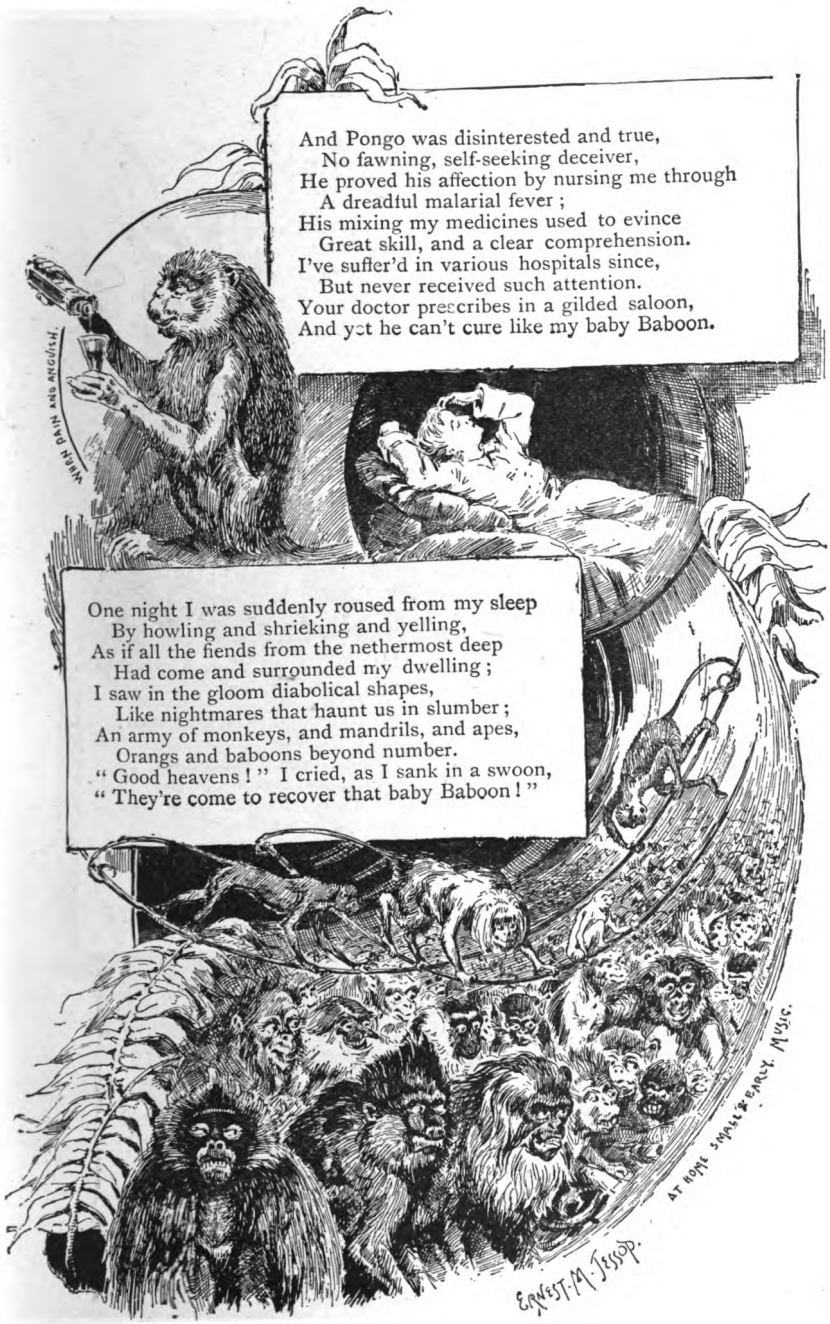
It happened one morning, when out with my gun—
'Twas seldom, indeed, I forgot it—
I found a big monkey asleep in the sun,
So tempting a mark that I shot it;
Alas! 'twas a mother-baboon and her child,
She died in so human a fashion!—
The poor little infant with sorrow was wild,
I wept with remorse and compassion,
And vow'd, by the stars in the heavens at noon,
I'd cherish that orphan, the baby Baboon.

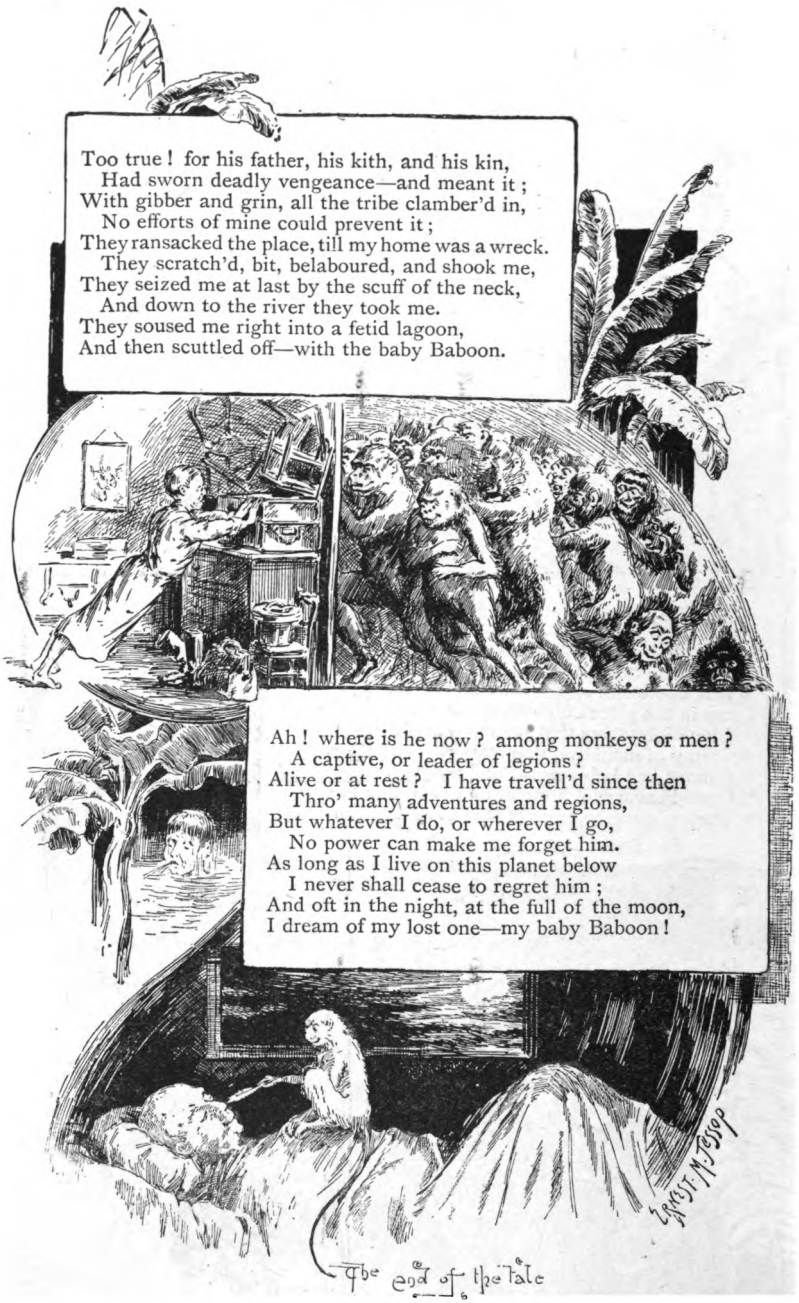


I carried him home to my primitive hut,
A couch of soft feathers I spread him.
His teeth were unequal to cracking a nut,
So on rice, milk, and sago I fed him.
I watch'd him by night, and I watch'd him by day,
With more than the love of a brother,
I murmured, "I mean to, as far as I may,
Make up for the loss of your mother;
So I'll rock you to sleep, and I'll feed with a spoon
My beautiful, bright little baby Baboon!"

And as he grew older, he grew more attach'd,
I kept him continually near me;
Tho' Poll scream'd in anger, and Puss hiss'd and scratch'd,
Still Pongo would comfort and cheer me.
He swung from the bell-rope, he jump'd over sticks,
He conjured with cards, hats, and money—
In short, play'd a thousand fantastical tricks,
No creature was ever so funny.
A "queer little cuss," an "amoozin' young coon"
(As Yankees would say) was my baby Baboon.

Oh! never was anyone blest with a friend
More faithful, devoted and fervent,
So clever and useful—he learnt to attend
Upon me in place of a servant;
In brushing my garments, and blacking my boots,
He show'd himself careful and handy,
He fann'd me to slumber, he lit my cheroots,
He brought me my soda-and-brandy.
Your Burnses may boast of their braw Bonnie Doon,
Give *me* Bonny *Town*—with my baby Baboon.
He learnt the flute, fiddle and banjo—the use
Of needles, thread, scissors, and thimbles,
To read and to write, and I tried to reduce
His own monkey-language to symbols.
He'd grin with delight at a comical tale,
And weep like a child at a sad one;
To win me to mirth, if my spirits should fail,
He'd caper and dance like a mad one;
He served me as harlequin, clown, pantaloon,
A host in himself was this baby Baboon.
ERNEST JESSOP.
TA-RA-RA


And Pongo was disinterested and true,
No fawning, self-seeking deceiver,
He proved his affection by nursing me through
A dreadful malarial fever;
His mixing my medicines used to evince
Great skill, and a clear comprehension.
I've suffer'd in various hospitals since,
But never received such attention.
Your doctor prescribes in a gilded saloon,
And yet he can't cure like my baby Baboon.
One night I was suddenly roused from my sleep
By howling and shrieking and yelling,
As if all the fiends from the nethermost deep
Had come and surrounded my dwelling;
I saw in the gloom diabolical shapes,
Like nightmares that haunt us in slumber;
An army of monkeys, and mandrils, and apes,
Orangs and baboons beyond number.
"Good heavens!" I cried, as I sank in a swoon,
"They're come to recover that baby Baboon!"
WHEN PAIN AND ANGUISH
ERNEST M. JESSOP.
AT HOME SMALL & EARLY MUSIC.


Too true! for his father, his kith, and his kin,
Had sworn deadly vengeance—and meant it;
With gibber and grin, all the tribe clamber'd in,
No efforts of mine could prevent it;
They ransacked the place, till my home was a wreck.
They scratch'd, bit, belaboured, and shook me,
They seized me at last by the scuff of the neck,
And down to the river they took me.
They soused me right into a fetid lagoon,
And then scuttled off—with the baby Baboon.
Ah! where is he now? among monkeys or men?
A captive, or leader of legions?
Alive or at rest? I have travell'd since then
Thro' many adventures and regions,
But whatever I do, or wherever I go,
No power can make me forget him.
As long as I live on this planet below
I never shall cease to regret him;
And oft in the night, at the full of the moon,
I dream of my lost one—my baby Baboon!
ERNEST M. JOSEP
The end of the tale

A Good Thing Spoiled!

By J. F. Sullivan.

First Critic: "Gad! I say, this new piece of Young Brightpen's is—really, hang it all—an astonishingly excellent piece of work!"

Second Critic: "By Jove, you're right! I say—what a pity it isn't by a celebrated dramatist: what a magnificent thing it would have been!"

Yours very truly,

Grant Allen

My First Book.

By Grant Allen.

Illustrations by George Hutchinson and Miss Fuller.

THE story of My First Book is a good deal mixed, and, like many other stories, cannot be fully understood without some previous allusion to what historians call "the causes which led to it." For my first book was not my first novel, and it is the latter, I take it, not the former, that an expectant world, as represented by the Editor and readers of the *Idler*, is anxious to hear about. I first blossomed into print with *Physiological Æsthetics* in 1877—the title alone will be enough for most people—and it was not till seven years later that I wrote and published my earliest long work of fiction, which I called *Philistia*. I wasn't born a novelist, I was only made one. Philosophy and science were the first loves of my youth. I dropped into romance as many men drop into drink, or opium-eating, or other bad practices, not of native perversity, but by pure force of circumstances. And this is how fate (or an enterprising publisher) turned me from an innocent and impecunious naturalist into a devotee of the muse of shilling shockers.

When I left Oxford in 1870, with a decent degree and nothing much else in particular to brag about, I took perforce to that refuge of the destitute, the trade of schoolmaster. To teach Latin and Greek verse at Brighton College, Cheltenham College, Reading Grammar School, successively, was the extremely uncongenial task imposed upon me by the chances of the universe. But in 1873, Providence, disguised as the Colonial Office, sent me out in charge of a new Government College at Spanish Town, Jamaica. I had always been psychological, and in the space and leisure of the lazy Tropics, I began to excogitate by slow degrees various expansive works on the science of mind, the greater number of which still remain unwritten. Returning to England in '76 I found myself out of work, and so committed to paper some of my views on the origin of the higher pleasure we derive from natural or artistic products; and I called my book *Physiological Æsthetics*. It was not my very first attempt at literature; already I had produced about a hundred or more magazine articles on various philosophical and scientific subjects, every one of which I sent to

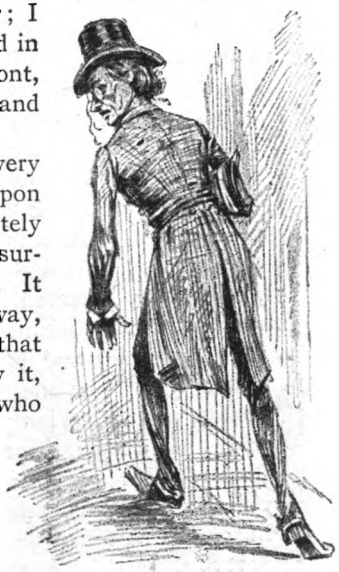
the editors of leading reviews, and every one of which was punctually "Declined with thanks," or committed without even that polite formality to the editorial waste-paper basket. Nothing daunted by failure, however, I wrote on and on, and made up my mind, in my interval of forced idleness, to print a book of my own at all hazards.

I wrote *Physiological Æsthetics* in lodgings at Oxford. When it was finished and carefully revised, I offered it to Messrs. Henry S. King & Co., who were then leading publishers of philosophical literature. Mr. Kegan Paul, their reader, reported doubtfully of

"THE NOOK"—MR. GRANT ALLEN'S HOUSE AT DORKING.
(From a photograph by Boning and Small.)

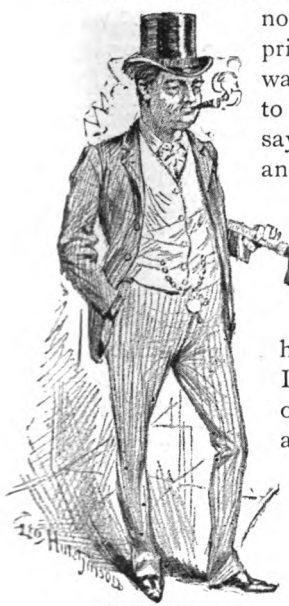
the work. It was not likely to pay, he said, but it contained good matter, and the firm would print it for me on the usual commission. I was by no means rich—for fear of exaggeration I am stating the case mildly—but I believed somehow in *Physiological Æsthetics*. I was young then, and I hope the court of public opinion will extend to me, on that ground, the indulgence usually shown to juvenile offenders. But I happened to possess a little money just

at that moment, granted me as compensation for the abolition of my office in Jamaica. Messrs. King reported that the cost of production (that mysterious entity so obnoxious to the soul of Mr. Walter Besant) would amount to about a hundred guineas. A hundred guineas was a lot of money then; but, being young, I risked it. It was better than if I had taken it to Monte Carlo, anyway. So I wrote to Mr. Paul with heedless haste to publish away right off, and he published away right off accordingly. When the bill came in, it was, if I recollect aright, somewhere about £120. I paid it without a murmur; I got my money's worth. The book appeared in a stately green cover, with my name in front, and looked very philosophical, and learned, and psychological.



"SCIENCE."

Poor *Physiological Æsthetics* had a very hard fate. When I come to look back upon the circumstances calmly and dispassionately now, I'm not entirely surprised at its unhappy end. It was a good book in its way, to be sure, though it's me that says it as oughtn't to say it, and it pleased the few who cared to read it; but it wasn't the sort of literature the public wanted. The public, you know, doesn't hanker after philosophy. Darwin, and Herbert Spencer, and the Editor of *Mind*, and people of that sort, tried my work and liked it; in point of fact, my poor little venture gained me at once, an unknown man, the friendship of not a few whose friendship was worth having. But financially, *Physiological Æsthetics* was a dead failure; it wasn't the sort of work to sell briskly at the bookstalls. Mr. Smith would have none of it. The reviews, indeed, were, almost without exception, favourable; the volume went off well for a treatise of its kind—that is to say, we got rid of nearly 300 copies; but even so, it left a deficit of some forty or fifty pounds to the bad against me. Finally, the



"FICTION."

remaining stock fell a victim to the flames in Mr. Kegan Paul's historical fire, when many another stout volume perished: and that was the end of my *magnum opus*. Peace to its ashes! Mr. Paul gave me £15 as compensation for loss sustained, and I believe I came out some £30 a loser by this, my first serious literary venture. In all these matters, however, I speak from memory alone, and it is possible I may be slightly wrong in my figures.

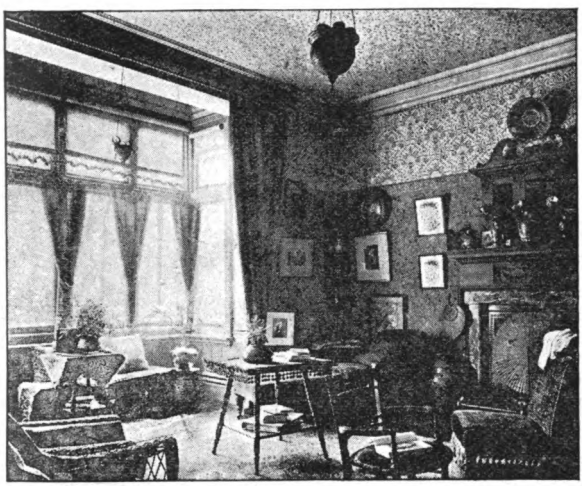
But though *Physiological Æsthetics* was a financial failure, it paid me in the end, both scientifically and commercially. Not only did it bring me into immediate contact with several among the leaders of thought in London, but it also made my name known in a very modest way, and induced editors—those arbiters of literary fate—to give a second glance at my unfortunate manuscripts. Almost immediately after its appearance, Leslie Stephen (I omit the Mr., *honoris causa*) accepted two papers of mine for publication in the *Cornhill*. "Carving a Cocoanut" was the first, and it brought me in twelve guineas. That was the very first money I earned in literature. I had been out of work for months, the abolition of my post in Jamaica having thrown me on my beam-ends, and I was overjoyed at so much wealth poured suddenly in upon me. Other magazine articles followed in due course, and before long I was earning a modest—a very modest—and precarious income, yet enough to support myself and my family. Moreover, Sir William Hunter, who was then engaged on his gigantic Gazetteer of India, gave me steady employment in his office at Edinburgh, and I wrote with my own hand the greater part of the articles on the North-West Provinces, the Punjaub, and Sind, in those twelve big volumes.

Meanwhile, I was hard at work in my leisure moments (for I have sometimes some moments which I regard as leisure) on another ambitious scientific work, which I called *The Colour-Sense*. This book I published on the half-profits system with Trübner. Compared to my first unhappy venture, *The Colour-Sense* might be counted a distinct success. It brought me in, during the course of about ten years, something like £25 or £30. As it only took me eighteen months to write, and involved little more than five or six thousand references, this result may be regarded as very fair pay for an educated man's time and labour. I have sometimes been reproached by thoughtless critics for deserting the noble pursuit of science in favour of fiction and filthy lucre. If those critics think twenty pounds a year a sufficient income for a scien-

tific writer to support himself and a growing family upon—well, they are perfectly at liberty to devote their own pens to the instruction of their kind without the slightest remonstrance or interference on my part.

I won't detail in full the history of my various intermediate books, most of which were published first as newspaper articles, and afterwards collected and put forth on a small royalty. Time is short, and art is long, so I'll get on at once to my first novel. I drifted into fiction by the sheerest accident. My friend, Mr. Chatto, most generous of men, was one of my earliest and staunchest literary supporters. From the outset of my journalistic days, he printed my articles in *Belgravia* and the *Gentleman's Magazine* with touching fidelity; and I take this opportunity of saying in public that to his kindness and sympathy I owe as much as to anyone in England. Mr. Walter Besant will have it there is no such thing as "generosity" in publishers. I beg leave to differ from him. I know the commercial value of literary work as well as any man, and I venture to say that both from Mr. Chatto and from Mr. Arrowsmith, of Bristol, I have met, time and again, with what I cannot help describing as most generous treatment. One day it happened that I wanted to write a scientific article on the impossibility of knowing one had seen a ghost, even if one saw one. For convenience sake, and to make the moral clearer, I threw the argument into narrative form, but without the slightest intention of writing a story. It was published in *Belgravia* under the title of "Our Scientific Observations on a Ghost," and was reprinted later in my little volume of *Strange Stories*. A little while after, to my immense surprise, Mr. Chatto wrote to ask me whether I could supply him with another story, like the last I had written, for the *Belgravia Annual*. I was rather taken aback at this singular request, as I hadn't the slightest idea I could do anything at all in the way of fiction. Still, like a good journalist, I never refuse an order of any sort; so I sat down at once and

wrote a tale about a mummy on the ghastliest and most approved Christmas number pattern. Strange to say, Mr. Chatto again printed it, and what was still more remarkable, asked for more of the same description. From that time forth, I went on producing short stories for *Belgravia;* but I hardly took them seriously, being immersed at the time in biological study. I looked upon my own pretensions in the way of fiction as an amiable fad of my kind friend Chatto; and not to prejudice any little scientific reputation I might happen to have earned, I published them all under the carefully-veiled pseudonym of "J. Arbuthnot Wilson."



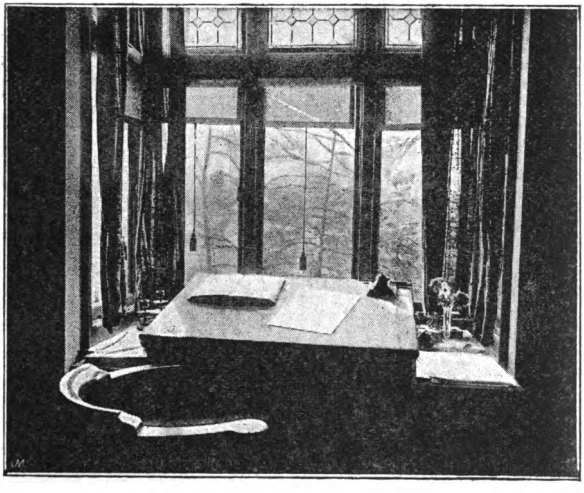
DRAWING-ROOM AT "THE NOOK."
(From a photograph by Messrs. Boning and Small.)

I would probably never have gone any further on my downward path had it not been for the accidental intervention of another believer in my powers as a story-writer. I had sent to *Belgravia* a little tale about a Chinaman, entitled "Mr. Chung," and written perhaps rather more seriously and carefully than my previous efforts. This happened to attract the attention of Mr. James Payn, who had then just succeeded to the editorship of the *Cornhill*. I had been a constant contributor to the *Cornhill* under Leslie Stephen's management, and by a singular coincidence I received almost at the same time two letters from Mr. Payn, one of them addressed to me in my own name, and regretting that he would probably be unable to insert my scientific papers in his magazine in future; the other, sent through Chatto and Windus to the imaginary J. Arbuthnot Wilson, and asking for a short story somewhat in the style of my "admirable Mr. Chung."

Encouraged by the discovery that so good a judge of fiction thought well of my humble efforts at story-writing, I sat down at once and produced two pieces for the *Cornhill*. One was "The

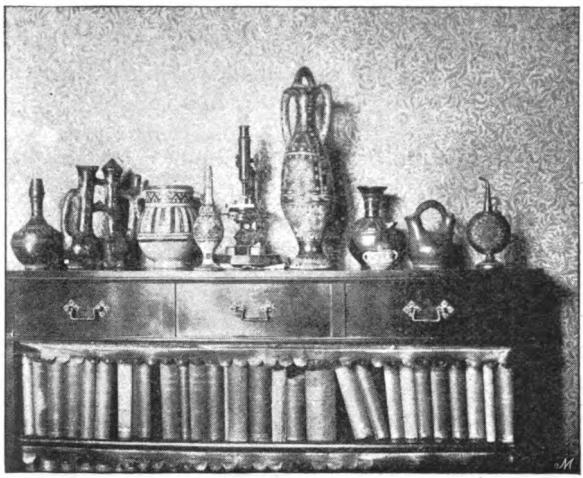
Reverend John Creedy"—a tale of a black parson who reverted to savagery—which has perhaps attracted more attention than any other of my short stories. The other, which I myself immensely prefer, was "The Curate of Churnside." Both were so well noticed that I began to think seriously of fiction as an alternative subject. In the course of the next year I wrote several more sketches of the same sort, which were published, either anonymously or still under the pseudonym, in the *Cornhill*, *Longman's*, *The Gentleman's*, and *Belgravia*. If I recollect aright, the first suggestion to collect and reprint them all in a single volume came from Mr. Chatto. They were published as *Strange Stories*, under my own name, and I thus, for the first time, acknowledged my desertion of my earliest loves—science and philosophy—for the less profound but more lucrative pursuit of literature.

Strange Stories was well received and well reviewed. Its reception gave me confidence for future ventures. Acting upon James Payn's advice, I set to work seriously upon a three-volume novel. My first idea was to call it "Born Out of Due Time," as it narrated the struggles of a Socialist thinker a century in front of his generation; but at Mr. Chatto's suggestion, the title was afterwards changed to *Philistia*. I desired, if possible, to run it through the *Cornhill*, and Mr. Payn promised to take it into his most favourable consideration for that purpose. However, when the unfinished manuscript was submitted in due time to his editorial eye, he rightly objected that it was far too socialistic for the tastes of his public. He said it would rather repel than attract readers. I was disappointed at the time. I see now that, as an editor, he was perfectly right; I was giving the public what



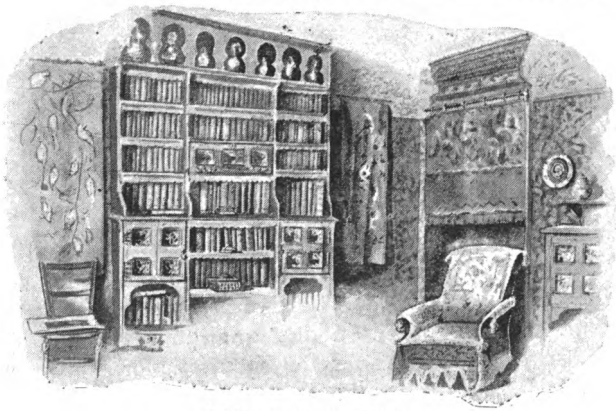
THE STUDY WINDOW.
(From a photograph by Messrs. Boning and Small.)

I felt and thought and believed myself, not what the public felt and thought and wanted. The education of an English novelist consists entirely in learning to subordinate all his own ideas and tastes and opinions to the wishes and beliefs of the inexorable British matron.



A SHELF IN THE STUDY.
(From a photograph by Messrs. Boning and Small.)

Mr. Chatto, however, was prepared to accept the undoubted risk of publishing *Philistia*. Only, to meet his views, the *dénoûment* was altered. In the original version, the hero came to a bad end, as a hero in real life who is in advance of his age, and consistent and honest, must always do. But the British matron, it seems, likes her novels to "end well"; so I married him off instead, and made him live happily ever afterward. Mr. Chatto gave me a lump sum down for serial rights and copyright, and ran *Philistia* through the pages of *The Gentleman's*. When it finally appeared in book form, it obtained on the whole more praise than blame, and, as it paid a great deal better than scientific journalism, it decided me that my *rôle* in life henceforth must be that of a novelist. And a novelist I now am, good, bad, or indifferent.



A CORNER IN THE STUDY.

If anybody gathers, however, from this simple narrative, that my upward path from obscurity to a very modest modicum of popularity and success was a smooth and easy one, he is immensely mistaken. I had a ten years' hard struggle for bread, into the details of which I don't care to enter. It left me broken in health and spirit, with all the vitality and vivacity crushed out of me. I suppose the object of this series of papers is to warn off ingenuous and aspiring youth from the hardest worked and worst paid of the professions. If so, I would say earnestly to the ingenuous and aspiring—"Brain for brain, in no market can you sell your abilities to such poor advantage. Don't take to literature if you've capital enough in hand to buy a good broom, and energy enough to annex a vacant crossing.

Told by the Colonel.

V.

A UNION MEETING.

By W. L. Alden.

Illustrations by R. Jack.

"WELL, sir," said the Colonel, "since you ask me what struck me most forcibly during my tower of England, and supposing that you want a civil answer to a civil question, I will say that the thing that astonished me more than anything else was the lack of religious enterprise in England.

"THE LACK OF RELIGIOUS ENTERPRISE IN ENGLAND."

"I have visited nearly every section of your country, and what did I find? Why, sir, in every town there was a parish church of the regulation pattern, and one other kind of church, which was generally some sort of Methodist in its persuasion. Now in America there is hardly a village which hasn't half-a-dozen different kinds of churches, and, as a rule, at least one of them belongs to some brand-new denomination, one that has just

been patented and put on the market, as you might say. When I lived in Middleopolis, Iowa, there were only fifteen hundred people in the place, but we had six kinds of churches. There was the Episcopalian, the Methodist, the Congregational, the Baptist, the Presbyterian, the Unitarian, and the Unleavened Disciples church, not to mention the Coloured Methodist church, which, of course, we didn't count with respectable white denominations. All these churches were lively and aggressive, and the Unleavened Disciples that had just been brought out was as vigorous as the oldest of them. All of them were furnishing good preaching and good music, and striving to outdo one another in spreading the Gospel and raising the price of pew rents. I could go for two or three months to the Presbyterian church, and then I could take a hack at the Baptists, and pass half-a-dozen Sundays with the Methodists, and all this variety would not cost me more than it would have cost to pay pew rent all the year round in any one church. And then, besides the preaching, there were the entertainments that each church had to get up if it didn't want to fall behind its rivals. We had Courses of Lectures, and Returned Missionaries, and Ice-cream Festivals till you couldn't rest. Why, although I am an old theatrical manager, I should not like to undertake to run a first-class American church in opposition to one run by some young preacher who had been trained to the business, and knew just what the popular religious taste demanded. I never was mixed up in church business but once, and then I found that I wasn't in my proper sphere."

"AN ICE-CREAM FESTIVAL.'

The Colonel chuckled slowly to himself, as his custom was when anything amused him, and I asked him to tell me his ecclesiastical experience.

"Well, this was the way of it," he replied. "One winter the leading citizens of the place decided to get up a series of Union meetings. Perhaps you don't know what a Union meeting is? I thought so. It bears out what I was saying about your want of

religious enterprise. Well, it's a sort of Monster Combination, as we would say in the profession. All the churches agree to hold meetings together, and all the preaching talent of the whole of them is collected in one pulpit, and each man preaches in turn. Of course, every minister has his own backers, who are anxious to see him do himself and his denomination credit, and who turn out in full force so as to give him their support. The result is that a Union meeting will always draw, even in a town where no single church can get a full house, no matter what attractions it may offer.

"Now a fundamental rule of a Union meeting is that no doctrines are to be preached to which anyone could object. The Baptist preacher is forbidden to say anything about baptism, and the Methodist can't allude to falling from grace in a Union meeting. This is supposed to keep things peaceful, and to avoid arguments and throwing of hymn-books and such-like proceedings, which would otherwise be inevitable.

"KNOCKED HIM DOWN WITH A KEROSENE LAMP."

"The Union meetings had been in progress for three or four nights when I looked into the Presbyterian church, where they were held, one evening, just to see how the thing was drawing. All the ministers in town, except the Episcopalian minister, were sitting on the platform waiting their cues. The Episcopalian minister had been asked to join in the services, but he had declined, saying that, if it was all the same to his dissenting and partially Christian friends, he would prefer to play a lone hand; and the coloured minister was serving out his time in connection with some of his neighbours' chickens that, he said, had flown into his kitchen, and committed suicide there, so he couldn't have been asked, even if the white ministers had been willing to unite with him.

"The Presbyterian minister was finishing his sermon when I entered, and soon as he had retired the Baptist minister got up and gave out a hymn which was simply crowded with Baptist doctrine. I had often heard it, and I remember that first verse, which ran this way:

"'I'd rather be a Baptist,
And wear a smiling face,
Than for to be a Methodist,
And always fall from grace.'

"The hymn was no sooner given out than the Methodist minister rose and claimed a foul on the ground that Baptist doctrine had been introduced into a Union meeting. There was no manner of doubt that he was right, but the Baptists in the congregation sang the hymn with such enthusiasm that they drowned the minister's voice. But when the hymn was over there was just a heavenly row. One Presbyterian deacon actually went so far as to draw on a Baptist elder, and there would have been blood shed if the elder had not knocked him down with a kerosene lamp, and convinced him that drawing pistols in church was not the spirit of the Gospel. Everybody was talking at once, and the women who were not scolding were crying. The meeting was beginning to look like an enthusiastic political meeting in Cork, when I rapped on the pulpit, and called for order. Everybody knew me, and wanted to hear what I had to say, so the meeting calmed down, except near the door, where the Methodists had got a large Baptist jammed into the woodbox, and in the vestibule, where the Unitarians had formed a ring to see the Unitarian minister argue with an Unleavened Disciple.

"I RAPPED ON THE PULPIT."

"I told the people that they were making a big mistake in trying to run that sort of an entertainment without an umpire. The idea pleased them, and before I knew what was going to be done they had passed a resolution making me umpire, and calling on me to decide whether the Baptist hymn constituted a foul. I decided that it did not, on the ground that, according to the original agreement, no minister was to preach any sectarian doctrines, but that nothing was said about the hymns that might be sung. Then I proposed that in order to prevent any future disputes, and to promote brotherly feeling, a new system of singing hymns should be adopted. I said, as far as I can recollect, that singing hymns did not come under the head of incidental music, but was a sort of *entr'acte*

music, intended to relax and divert the audience while bracing up to hear the next sermon. This being the case it stood to reason that hymn singing should be made a real pleasure, and not an occasion for hard feeling and the general heaving of books and footstools. Now, said I, this can be managed in this way. When you sing let everybody sing the same tune, but let each denomination sing whatever words it prefers to sing. Everybody will sing his own doctrines, but nobody will have any call to feel offended.

"The idea was received with general enthusiasm, especially among the young persons present, and the objections made by a few hard-headed old conservatives were overruled. The next time singing was in order the Unitarian minister selected a familiar short metre tune, and each minister told his private flock what hymn to sing to it. Everybody sang at the top of his or her lungs, and as nobody ever understands the words that anybody else is singing, there did not seem to be anything strange in the singing of six different hymns to the same tune. There was a moment when things were a little strained in consequence of the Presbyterians, who were a strong body, and had got their second wind, singing a verse about predestination with such vigour as partly to swamp their rivals, but I decided that there was no foul, and the audience, being rather tired with their exertions, settled down to listen to the next sermon.

"WHAT FOLLOWED."

"The next time it was the Methodist minister who gave out the tune, and he selected one that nobody who was not born and bred a Methodist had ever heard of. We used to sing something very much like it at the windlass when I was a sailor, and it had a regular hurricane chorus. When the Methodist contingent started in to sing their hymn to this tune, not a note could any of the rival denominations raise. They stood it in silence until two verses had been sung, and then——

"Well, I won't undertake to describe what followed. After about five minutes the Methodists didn't feel like singing any more. In

fact, most of them were outside the meeting-house limping their way home, and remarking that they had had enough of thishyer fellowship with other churches to last them for the rest of their lives. Inside the meeting-house the triumphant majority were passing resolutions calling me a depraved worldling, who, at the instigation of the devil, had tried to convert a religious assemblage into an Orange riot. Even the Unitarians, who always maintained that they did not believe in the devil, voted for the resolutions, and three of them were appointed on the committee charged with putting me out. I didn't stay to hear any more sermons, but I afterwards understood that all the ministers preached at me, and that the amount of union displayed in putting the blame of everything on my shoulders was so touching that men who had been enemies for years shook hands and called one another brothers.

"Yes! we are an enterprising people in ecclesiastical matters, and I calculate that it will be a long time before an English village will see a first-class Union meeting.

The Reverend Peter Flannery.

By Frank Mathew.

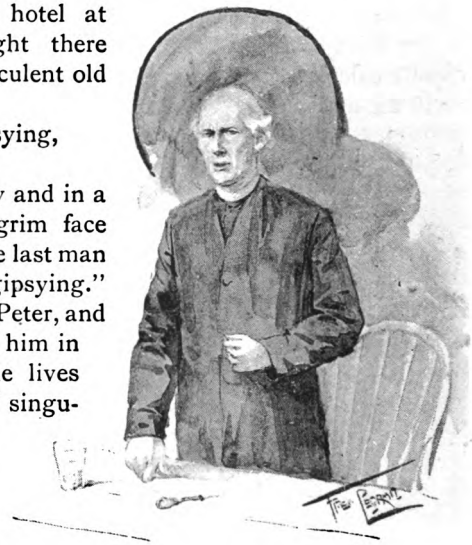
Illustrations by F. Pegram.

MY friend the Reverend Peter Flannery is at once the sternest looking and the gentlest of men. To look at him you would fancy he had spent a fierce life, but the truth is he has lived in a wilderness, and in his broad parish of Moher there is not a mouse afraid of him.

I first met him in a hotel at Lisdoonvarna. One night there was singing, and a big, truculent old priest sang in his turn :

"When we went a-gipsying,
A long time ago."

He sang very seriously and in a hoarse voice. With his grim face and white hair he looked the last man in the world to "go a-gipsying." Afterwards I came to know Peter, and spent many evenings with him in the little house where he lives with an old housekeeper of singular ugliness and a turbulent small boy known as Patrick Flannery. I found him absurdly simple, a man knowing nothing of the world and troubling himself little about anything beyond the borders of Moher, but though he is so unpretending he has deep respect for his dignity as a Parish Priest.



"HE SANG VERY SERIOUSLY AND IN A HOARSE VOICE."

On one of those evenings in his naked little parlour he told me the story of the only adventure of his life.

A small island with a ruined house on it lies near the shore of the most desolate part of the parish. A miser was strangled there for his money by his daughter, seventy years ago, so the house is known for miles around as the "House of the Murder," and the

island is under a curse. Then it was a headland, but the sea cut it off from the coast after the murder. On all that coast the Atlantic encroaches, every now and then it makes a mouthful of a cliff or takes a mouthful out of a village, but men say the island is haunted by the ghost of an old man with a choked face and purple foam on his lips, and is given up to the Evil Spirits.

One stormy winter's night, nearly twelve years ago now, Peter Flannery was riding back from visiting a dying woman near Liscannor. It was raining, the wind was dead against him, he had seldom been out on such a night though his life-work took him on many a wild lonely ride. As he reached the Liscannor Cross-roads his horse stopped, and a heart-broken voice came from under the trees:

"ONE STORMY WINTER'S NIGHT.

"Remember the Dark Man! For God's sake remember the Dark Man!"

He knew it was Andy Lonergan, the "Dark" Man—that is, the blind man—who haunted that place day and night.

"Is that yourself, Andy?" said he.

"'Tis so, yer Riverince, but 'tis the black night to be abroad, sure the Banshee is keenin' on th' island."

"The Banshee, is it? I know, I know, and manny's the time I've hearrd that same, Andy, there's never a windy night without her."

"Is it the wind ye mane, Father? I know the wind's cry if annyone, but 'twasn't only that on th' island to-night, 'twas a woman's voice, sometimes 'twas like a child's. There'll be sore hearrts in Moher the morrn."

"Ah well, Andy! manny's the queer thing ye've heard in your time," said Peter, and he rode on homewards, but Andy's words kept in his head. Now the blind man was half crazed, yet dared not lie about the Banshee; perhaps there was some poor soul in trouble out on the island. At last he turned his horse; as he rode back past the Cross-roads he called out, "Are ye there, Andy?" but no answer came. The horse seemed to have strong objections to going seaward, and Peter himself had misgivings; he is a Clare man, the son of a Ballyvaughan fisherman, and though of course he does not believe in the Banshee, yet would rather not have gone where there was any chance of meeting her. Then he thought—suppose Andy was fooling him! He could fancy the blind man sitting hidden and grinning at him as he rode back past the Cross-roads, it would be a fine joke in Moher, he flushed at such irreverence.

"FASTENED HIS HORSE TO A WALL."

Then he reached the shore, dismounted, fastened his horse to a wall, and walked down across the slipping shingle, crunching it under foot; he was tripped by tangles of seaweed and stumbled over a fishing coracle, could see scarcely a yard in front of him. "'Tis a blind man's holiday," he thought. "Faith, Dark Andy could see as much as I can, and why couldn't McCaura leave his coracle in a sensible place?" He went to the water's edge, the foam splashed over him, he could see nothing except now and then the white flash of a breaker, and was deafened by the noise. A few minutes of this was enough; he turned back with a smile at the absurdity of his going out there at that time of night. "There's no fool like an old one," he said; then stopped

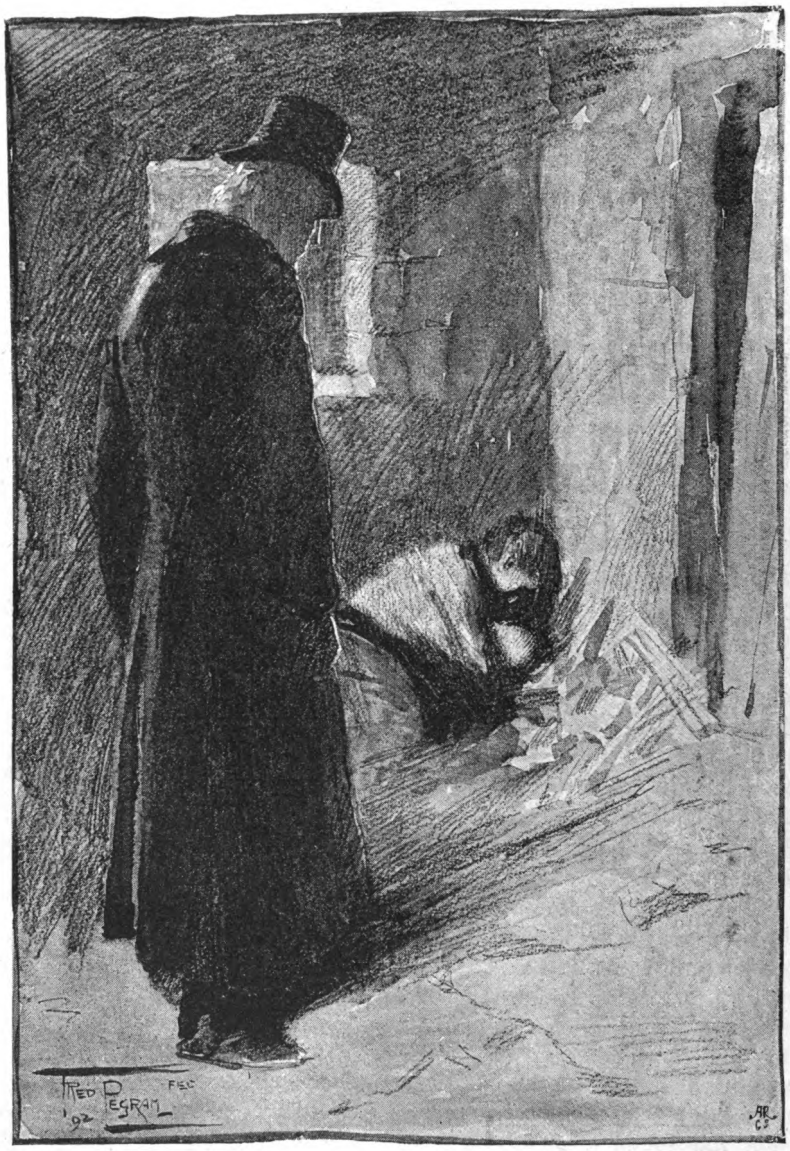
to listen again, and in a pause (when the wind seemed to be taking breath for a howl) heard the cry of a child, and it came from the island. How could any mortal baby be on the island in a hurricane, when there was not a soul for miles round would go there for love or money at any time? His misgivings rushed back with uncanny legends of lost souls bound on the winds or imprisoned in the waves that always keep racing towards the land yet always break before reaching it. This might be some Devil's trap. True, he could exorcise the Devil, but would rather not.

He waited during the new howl of the wind—it seemed endless—then in the next pause heard the child's voice again—it was an unmistakably human squall—his misgivings vanished. "'Tis a child, sure enough," he said, "an' a strong one at that." The question for him was not how did the child get on the island, but how was he to get it off? McCaura's cabin was a mile away across the bog, and on such a night no one would be out except Dark Andy, who would be worse than useless. The only thing was to go out to the island himself, so he groped his way to the coracle.

Now a coracle is a sort of canoe, a shallow frame covered with tarpaulin, a ticklish craft, but it can live in the wildest sea, though, as Peter said, "'Tis always on the look out for a chance to drown ye." He shouldered it as one to the manner born. Many a day and night had he spent afloat in the time when he was a fisher boy, he thought how often since then he had longed to put out to sea, only his mighty dignity as a Parish Priest forbade it; his old bones were stiff, but he was as strong as ever.

Well, to cut a long story short, he launched that coracle and reached the island, not without hard and risky work, dragged the coracle ashore and made his way to the ruined house; the roof had fallen in, the windows were gone, only the bare walls were left.

He could see nothing, but the child's cry guided him, and then in a corner he found a woman lying huddled on a heap of fallen plaster and laths, her face was to the wall, her left arm clutched a tiny baby. He knelt down by her and touched her forehead—she was dead. By her dress he knew she came from the Arran Islands, her tragedy was plain to him, she must have been brought to the "House of the Murder" to keep the birth secret. Perhaps the fishers bringing her to the mainland had been caught by the gale, and could place her in no better shelter in the time of her trouble. Now the Arran folk were familiar, many were of his



"SHE WAS DEAD."

kindred; he must have known this woman from her babyhood, and as a slip of a girl running barefoot on the hills. He turned her face to him, but could only see it dimly; it was much changed, too, and half hidden by wet hair. Then the thought came that he had no right to pry into her secret; he laid her head back reverently—she lay there with her face to the wall as if she had died in shame.

He took the baby and chafed it, wrapping his woollen comforter round it, he thought it was dying—his knowledge of babies was small—so he decided to baptise it at once. There was no lack of water for the rain still fell in torrents, so he filled a cup that lay by the mother, and baptised that whining infant as reverently and solemnly as if he had been in a great cathedral.

"EGO TE BAPTIZO, PATHRICIUS."

It must have been a strange scene in that "House of the Murder" — the gaunt old man dripping from the rain and the sea, holding the baby tenderly and awkwardly, with the body of the mother lying beside them. He gave the baby the name Patrick, the first that came to him, "*Ego te baptizo, Pathricius*," and so forth in his queer Latin brogue, and the small new Christian howled dismally, and the gale answering howled outside like a baffled demon.

Then he unbuttoned the breast of his great coat and fastened the baby inside — so that only its ridiculous red face could be seen— and started for home; he crossed more easily this time, found his old horse standing in dumb resignation huddled under the lee of the wall, and rode home through the storm at a good pace with a light heart.

Every now and then the child cried to show that the life was in it, and then he tried to quiet it tenderly with: "Be hushed

now, vick machree, son of me hearrt! Ah! be sthill, Pathrick. Be aisy, ye cantankerous little cur!"

There was great work that night in the little house, when the old priest and his housekeeper welcomed their guest. And when the baby was cosily asleep, Peter got into his big armchair and mixed himself a steaming tumbler of punch—for no man values punch more, though of course in strict moderation—and he felt he deserved it to-night. "An' would ye believe it?" and at this point of his story his voice shook with pathos—"would ye believe it, at th' instant when I was putting it to me lips the clock sthruck twelve, and so I couldn't taste a dhrop, not a single dhrop!" For you see if he had tasted it after midnight he could not have said Mass. This was a lame ending to his one adventurous night.

The baby was kept in the priest's house, and, when the gale went down, the mother's body was brought from the island and buried; Father Peter found afterwards who she was, though her name never passed his lips.

For nearly twelve years now, "Pathrick" has ruled the priest's house, and has thriven under the rough tenderness of Peter Flannery. Meanwhile Peter has led always the same quiet life, rising in the early morning to say Mass in the cold chapel before a scanty congregation of women—many of them pray aloud with shut eyes and entire disregard of their neighbours—and Patrick now serves him as clerk, looking very serious in his little white surplice, like a Cupid in a monk's cowl.

Then he rides out on his sick-calls, miles and miles away through the bogs and over the hills, for he goes at any hour of the day or night to anyone who chooses to summon him; or he walks down to the school, where he usually finds Patrick standing in the corner with his face to the wall in disgrace; or he goes his rounds through the Village of Moher.

Many a time have I seen him striding down the Village "with a face like an executioner," and the dirty little ragged children running to meet him, and snuggling their smeared faces against his long coat. The first time babies see him they yell as if he was the Devil, but the next time they would yell louder still if he forgot to fondle them. Many a time have I seen him standing in the street, beleaguered by a cluster of women, scowling nervously over them and looking to see if there is any chance of rescue; while they all talk at once, quarrelling among themselves:

"Ah! Peggy Lonergan, dacint woman, be whisht, can't ye?"

"Mary Ronan, I take shame o' ye to be throublin' the holy priest so. Won't ye be lettin' me have a single worrd wid 'm?"

And now in the evenings he has something to dream about, and when he sits alone by the fire in his naked parlour, smoking his old pipe, with his tumbler of punch smoking too, to keep him company, he dreams of the great future of Patrick Flannery. He sees that cantankerous urchin grow up a model, go to Maynooth and win prizes there, rise rapidly in the Church, and even become a Bishop. It is true Pat will have to change greatly before then, for it is a queer Bishop he would make now, but time works wonders and Pat has a good heart.

"WHEN WE WENT A-GIPSYING, A LONG TIME AGO."

Peter hears him preaching the great sermons himself has never preached to the great congregations he has never seen. And he thinks that "His Lorrdship Docthor Flannery" has a pleasing sound, that Bishop Flannery will be loved by all, that blessings will go with him, it is he hat will have an eye for true worth and never let a plain man spend his life in a wilderness while smoother-tongued men have all they want.

But at this point the dream breaks, for he knows in his heart that he would be sorry to leave his wilderness, so when the clock strikes nine he slowly finishes his punch, knocks out the ashes from his pipe, and goes up the steep stairs to his bedroom, quavering to himself in his hoarse voice,

"When we went a-gipsying,
A long time ago."

A BLACK CARNIVAL

By Eden Phillpotts.

Illustrations by Ronald Gray.

THERE is an ancient marine saw, with respect to hurricanes in the West Indies, which runs thus:

June: too soon;
July: stand by;
August: look out you must;
September: remember;
October: all over.

I learnt this by heart, and went out in February. That left an ample hurricane margin both ways, and it did not preclude exciting possibilities in other directions, either. There is no close time for earthquakes and plagues and droughts; and the beauty of the Tropics chiefly seems to me to lie in the fact that a man can hardly go to them without having his money's worth of danger and discomfort somehow. Then, if he ultimately gets back to temperate and civilised latitudes with all the information he has collected, there is no limit to the things he may write and say. The art of writing a book of travel lies in knowing what proportions of fact and fiction produce the exact general impression it is your desire

to convey. Mere consistent veracity is dull, and appeals to no man; sustained fiction in historical work must be considered immoral and unprincipled; but the skilfully-adjusted management of these combined qualities should result in a living and moving and vital picture, as much superior to the globe-trotter's farrago of accurate dates and diary-entries as a good painting is to a photograph.

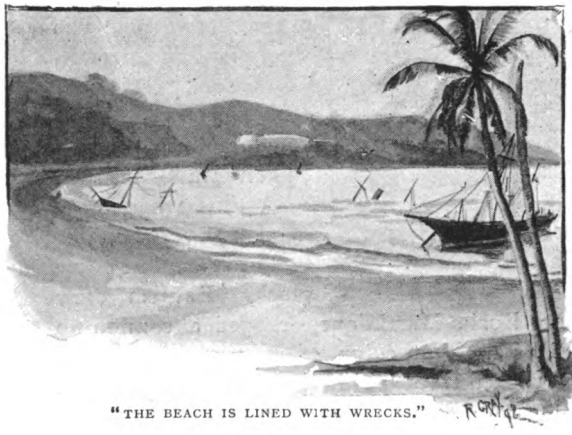
Before the trusty steamship "Rhine," which carried me and my fortunes through the West Indies, reached the roadstead of St. Pierre, Martinique, she passed a very interesting object. Distant about three hundred yards from the mainland of the island stands a lofty, weather-stained conical rock, with grey and white sides and a brown head. One has often heard of battle-ships solid and immovable as rocks; and here we have a rock that formerly answered in every particular to a man-of-war. This splinter from some volcanic upheaval of the remote past has indeed, in its day, been recognised as an addition to the Royal Navy and, as such, was duly christened and commissioned. H.M.S. "Diamond Rock" is a memorial of the West Indian wars between France and England. At a time when these great powers were differing upon every possible question, and fighting tooth and nail at every possible opportunity, a plucky English crew landed upon Diamond Rock, Martinique, dragged a cannon up to the summit of it, and from that coign of vantage opened fire upon the French, and caused them no little inconvenience for a lengthy period.

"DIAMOND ROCK."

Then we passed Trois Ilets—a spot deeply interesting as the birthplace of the Empress Josephine; and presently, firing a gun which made the green hills ring, we dropped anchor off St. Pierre.

I said that Martinique is not less blessed in the wonders of Nature than surrounding islands, and the fact is superficially apparent before the little town we have now arrived at. Last year a terrific tornado brought dire disaster on its black and fiery wings. It tore the roofs off the houses, the crowns off the palms; it laid half the island in ruins, and took nearly four hundred human lives. It also destroyed a man who wrote reviews of books for the local journal. That was the feature of the hurricane; and it is an instructive fact, as tending to show how prodigal Nature is of her wonderful resources. She could easily have killed one *littérateur*

without rending an entire island to pieces, and involving nearly four hundred ordinary beings. She might have sent a yellow fever microbe in the night, or an author, or some other definite and deadly trifle; the thing might, in fact, have been brought about at a minimum expenditure of force and energy. But Nature paid that critic the compliment of cutting him off in a magnificent and dramatic manner. The thunder roared his requiem; the quivering caligraphy of the lightning wrote his cenotaph in the awful sky; roof-trees were blown miles inland; cattle were slain; vessels were wrecked; the whole face of Nature was distorted when he died. Reviewers do not often perish. Few people have seen a dead reviewer; and if Nature considers such manifestations as those I have mentioned to be necessary at the times of their passing away, it will easily be seen she cannot destroy them every afternoon. She would simply exhaust herself, and make the world a wilderness.

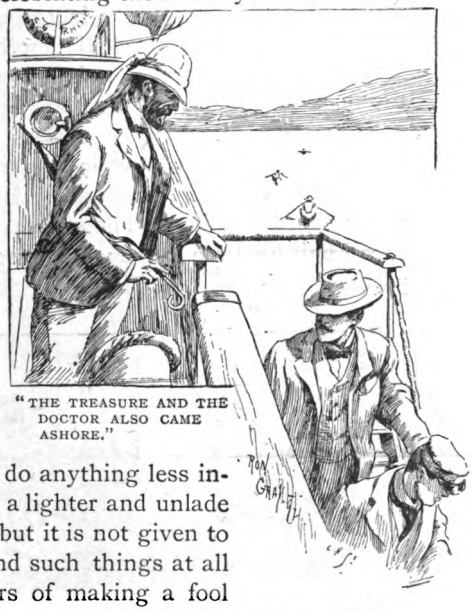


"THE BEACH IS LINED WITH WRECKS."

St. Pierre met the full brunt of that hurricane last summer. Of the vessels which rode in her little harbour at the time but few escaped to tell the tale. No sailing-ship could get out in the teeth of the tempest; no anchor could hold against the terrific surges of the sea. One craft after another, therefore, was hurled in upon the rocks; great and small met the same fate; and now the beach is lined with gaunt and shattered wrecks; each "vailing her high-top lower than her ribs to kiss her burial"; each a ruined monument of drowned lives and desolate homes. Ashore, the results of the hurricane are also manifest. From shipboard, St. Pierre looks like a spick and span new town—an effect produced by the miles of bright, fresh corrugated iron roofing. On every side also the trunks of the palms are visible, with the usual crown of fruit and foliage missing from them. But as the Purser of the "Rhine" (a gentleman generally known as "The Treasure," from his combination of the best Christian qualities) truly remarked, the

cocoanut palms could scarcely be blamed for losing their heads at such a terrible time. Everybody on the island did so.

It was particularly interesting to contrast the condition of Martinique, during that terrific experience of a few months before, with the state of things which prevailed upon my visit to it. The inhabitants, if they had not forgotten their past miseries, had, at any rate, quite banished them for the present. St. Pierre was, in fact, keeping high festival, and celebrating the last day of Carnival. Lenten rigours would set in upon the following morning. The island lost not a moment, and, as a result, we had no little difficulty in securing shore-labour for our ship. The "Rhine" was bringing a valuable cargo for the town, and naturally she wanted some aid in the transmission of it. But Quashie cares little for hard work at any time, and when Carnival is in full swing, and there are facilities for going out walking dressed like a devil, he of course objects to do anything less interesting. A man may labour in a lighter and unlade steamers any day of the week, but it is not given to people to don tails and wings and such things at all times. When opportunity offers of making a fool of himself in a public place, the West Indian negro rarely neglects it. So we had to wait awhile until our representatives could rouse the shore authorities, and secure assistance. This enforced idleness awoke all the baser part of our Captain's nature, in that it greatly delayed the ship; but, personally, I thanked Heaven about it, because I was able to go on shore and look round without any immediate haunting fear of being left behind when the "Rhine" should sail.



"THE TREASURE AND THE DOCTOR ALSO CAME ASHORE."

The Treasure, already mentioned, and the Doctor also came ashore. This medical man is my own brother, and a source of great gratification to me at all times. I should urge every young man who has an intelligent brother to get him to go in for medicine. When he has passed his divers examinations you know that he is safe. Then you can put your life into his hands with-

out fear of bills or unpleasantness, because it would be inhuman for a medical man to charge his own brother. Besides, by taking his drugs you pay him a great compliment. Point this out from the first, and you have him at your mercy. It is a splendid thing to get your relations into professions. I know a man with a brother in the Law, and another in Orders, and a third a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons. That man has an increasing family, and is lax about paying his rent, and keeps tradespeople waiting for their money, and has repeated dangerous illnesses. But it all costs him nothing. His brothers manage it in some way. His wife and children are well dressed, he gets away every summer to the seaside, and he has some reputation as a Churchwarden too. He is a thoroughly useless member of Society, but his brothers think it worth while preserving him for the credit of his family. They meet about once a fortnight and go into his affairs, and keep him afloat. That man, if he was brotherless, would spend half his time in the workhouse and half in the hospital, and probably finish his days in gaol.

"THE MEDICAL MAN."

Martinique is an emerald island set in a sapphire sea. Great billowy hills, rich in foliage, fringed with the palms, rise in tiers and terraces, higher and higher and higher, into cloudland. Soft vapours, grey in shadow, golden in the sun, hide the caps of the mountains, and the fertile lower country is green under bright, grass-like plantations of the sugar-cane.

Our Treasure, who is nearer seven feet high than six, and broad in proportion, wanted to dress up before going on shore. He said:

"If we put on masks and ridiculous clothes of some sort, we shall be like the rest, and so escape insult; if, on the other hand, we go as we are, in simple white ducks, we are bound to

attract attention as being the only respectable people about. A Carnival crowd doesn't care what it does." I said:

"You are wrong. The respectable always command respect, even in the West Indies. You are too big to dress up. Go unadorned. Let people see that you are solid flesh and blood, and they will not dare to trifle with a man of your inches; but if you put on a mask and so forth, they will take you for a wicker-work, pantomime giant, or something of that kind, and poke you with sticks and make fun at your expense, and very likely spoil your temper and injure your person. By dressing up, you will, in fact, bring our whole party into disrepute, and the ship too."

"'THE RESPECTABLE ALWAYS COMMAND RESPECT.'"

The Doctor said:

"I shall take a false nose with me and watch events. If I find people are hurt at my conventional appearance, I shall put it on, not because it will give me pleasure to do so, but out of respect to others."

Then we all went ashore, merely in the character of spectators; and I have no hesitation in saying that the main street of St. Pierre, upon that blazing afternoon, furnished the strangest, wildest, most fantastic and bewildering sight which, up to that moment, we had ever beheld.

Picture to yourself a road, by no means broad, lined with open stores, before the doors and windows of which stand a dense, double row of sightseers on chairs and forms. Above, suspended across the street from ropes, hang a few lamps; the upper chambers of the houses have bright red and green jalousies; the roofs are of tiles and new iron and wood. These last are bleached silvery grey by the tropical sunshine. The stone-paved street itself is crammed with a brilliant pandemonium, a whirling, winding, restless, laughing, screaming, dancing, gesticulating, rainbow-coloured mass of men and women, children, animals and effigies. The sun blazes, the air trembles, the white dust flies;

the atmosphere is full of hot, sweet scents of fruit, and the sounds of wild drum and trumpet music; the eyes ache at so much colour; the senses are paralysed before such a howling wilderness of mad novelty.

Red wings and yellow, long tails, horns, masks, feathers, tattered finery, musical instruments, stilts, gigantic umbrellas, hobby-horses, bizarre costumes, deafening noises, sunshine and black shadow, youth and age, beast and man, were all here blended, commingled, muddled, entangled, kaleidoscopically mixed to the extremest verge of a new chaos. Every roaring, rollicking party was a study in novel attire and new forms of imbecility; every individual conveyed a hint of some mental condition which the sane would do well to avoid. Decent laughter was lost in insane screamings and howlings; pleasurable folly was buried under sheer crack-brained fooling; there was neither rhyme nor reason in their proceedings; no method in their madness; no harmony in their songs and dances; no music in their ululations; no melody in their music. We at home—say on a Bank Holiday—are second to none in the arts of foolery, but we only display our weakness in crowds or groups. Here, however, one saw solitary masqueraders, walking absolutely unaccompanied, playing the hopeless idiot all alone. To see a fellow-creature making a fool of himself by himself, with no intent save to give himself pleasure, is a deplorable and demoralising spectacle.

"CRAMMED WITH A BRILLIANT PANDEMONIUM."

The Doctor became infected first. He caught the spirit of Carnival in about ten minutes. His eye flashed, his feet began to keep time to the barbarous music, and he brought out his false nose. He suggested that the Treasure should put it on, but the Treasure refused. They argued and wrangled in the public street, and finally both said they would drop the subject and declare honour satisfied if I put on the nose. This, very rightly, I declined to do. Then they pretended to be annoyed about it, and declared that I was simply a wet blanket on the whole proceedings. The Doctor said:

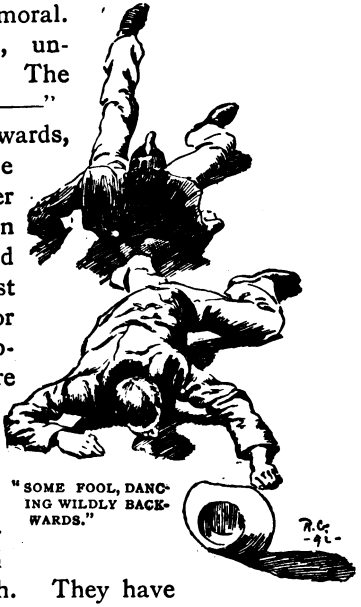
"You're ruining the Carnival, that's what you're doing."

And the Treasure remarked:

"I hate to see a chap try to be superior to his surroundings. What certain people want out here, I cannot see. The wisest men unbend the bow sometimes, don't they?"

I said:

"Yes, but not in false noses, and at a sacrifice of self-respect. I *am* unbending the bow; I am glorying in all I see; I am sympathising with everything and everybody; but I am endeavouring to preserve a spirit of common decency at the same time. That false nose is altogether undesirable. The lesson it conveys appears to me immoral. It is a drunkard's nose; a loathsome, unwholesome, gruesome, indelicate nose. The man who puts it on is making a joke of——"



"SOME FOOL, DANCING WILDLY BACKWARDS."

Then some fool, dancing wildly backwards, knocked me, heels-over-head, into the centre of the festivities, and when other good-natured clowns picked me up again out of the gutter, my own party pretended it did not know me. So I shook the dust off myself generally against the Doctor and the Treasure, and went on my philosophic way alone. In all St. Pierre there was scarcely a responsible individual out that afternoon, excepting myself and a few coolies. These Indian folks viewed their African brothers and sisters with quiet contempt. Their religion does not necessitate any periodical and ostentatious farewells of the flesh. They have also a finer sense of fun than negroes. Which appears, for coolies are confirmed wife-killers, and may be fairly credited with no little genuine humour in their methods of destroying relations.

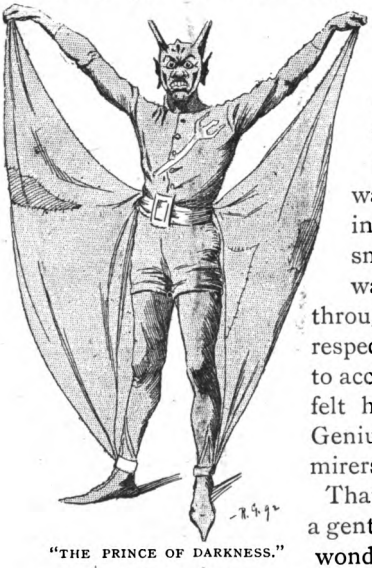
I can best give a general idea of that heterogeneous gathering by describing some of the individual masqueraders, or groups of them. The reader must then blend them in such proportions and combinations as he pleases. One thing is certain: he will not achieve any more extraordinary results than really appeared.

Martinique negresses are famed all the world over for their gorgeous attire. It is, I suppose, the result of old-fashioned French taste, and the ordinary Ethiopian love for colour. Their everyday garments would make a rainbow grow pale with envy.

They deal entirely in primary hues, and beggar description for brilliance of reds and yellows, greens and blues, relieved with snowy white. But at Carnival time, these women presented really astounding studies. They vied with the butterflies in brilliance, the humming birds in lustre; their garments were purple and orange and crimson, their trinkets were silver and gold; their turbans gleamed with shining satins; their ample forms actually blazed with luxuriant colours I had never seen before at all, or even dreamed of. They wore pink silk stockings, short frocks, reaching only to the knee, and wonderful button-boots; and they went about abreast, arm-in-arm, greatly enjoying the admiration they received.

"THE GEM OF THE GATHERING."

The male masqueraders trusted for their success to originality of invention, and many, like true artists, produced their effects by novel combinations of old materials. Perhaps the gem of the entire quaint gathering was a long-legged negro with a tail, a hideous mask, and a tight-fitting black vest. He carried a sugar-cane, to which was fastened a walking-stick, and this, in turn, was surmounted by a very small and ragged red parasol. He wandered screaming and dancing through the throng, exciting profound respect and keen delight. Nobody offered to accompany him or take his arm. It was felt he occupied a pedestal by himself. Genius has no friends, only professed admirers and secret enemies.

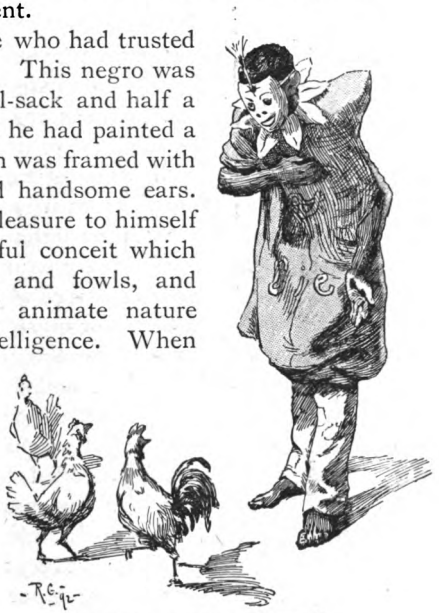


"THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS."

That the Prince of Darkness is not always a gentleman was sufficiently proven in that wondrous Carnival at Martinique. The negroes much affect fiendish impersonations at all times of rejoicing, and, here, dozens of dusky and lurid devils flitted hither and thither, generally in affable communion with characters of a more

respectable description. These evil ones were, as a rule, extremely shabby and out-at-elbows, noisy and vulgar. The Martinique conception of a bad angel is, in fact, decidedly cheap. It has nothing in common with the Miltonian fiend, for instance, but rather resembles those coarse travesties of Mephistopheles which we suffer from in Christmas pantomime. With their stupid antics and ludicrous masks, and dirty patched wings and seedy toasting-forks, these West Indian demons seemed to suggest that business must be deplorably slack where they were supposed to come from. I pictured the place under bad business management, out of repair, with mortgages all foreclosed, and the bailiffs in. But, now-a-days, the infernal regions, like sundry other shaky concerns, are simply kept going by advertisement.

Then I met another creature who had trusted to familiar trifles for his effects. This negro was quite beautifully got up in a coal-sack and half a cocoa-nut shell. Upon the shell he had painted a genial idiotic face, and the concern was framed with the artist's own black wool and handsome ears. He walked up and down, giving pleasure to himself and the rest. He had a playful conceit which prompted him to bow to dogs, and fowls, and goats, and other fragments of animate nature which possess no conscious intelligence. When he did this the populace screamed with delight.



"HE HAD A PLAYFUL CONCEIT."

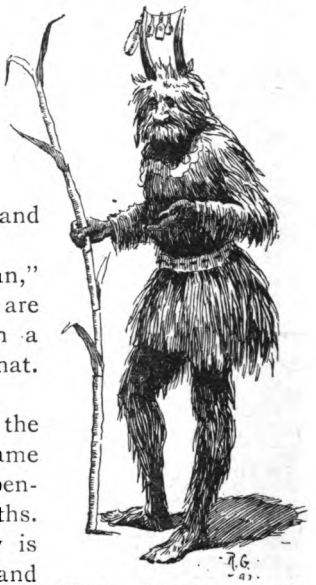
Horses and riders were also slightly entertaining. A dummy man was tied upon a living one. They wore similar masks, and careered round with extravagant gestures, the dummy being perhaps the more self-contained of the two.

Those who merely watched these varied scenes were interesting in themselves. The greater number appeared to be French-Creole storekeepers. They sat in rows with their wives and families. They were for the most part attired in black, and they behaved with absolute propriety. Scattered amongst these respectable people one also noted a sprinkling of the customary mulattos, quadroons, and butter-coloured folks.

Ridiculous French infants, with fierce black eyebrows, moustaches

and imperials painted on to their little white faces, trotted, hand-in-hand, among the masqueraders, and were hailed with no small delight by the adult fools. One tiny man of tender years fell down and evidently hurt himself a good deal. At another time he would doubtless have advertised his agony with childhood's penetrating roar; but on this occasion he evidently felt such an expression of feeling must be misplaced. He wore a beard, and, with a grand effort, managed to live up to it.

Anon I met the Treasure and my medical relation. They were watching a weird creature with huge horns, a string of empty medicine bottles hung between them, and extraordinary raiment of beads and fur. The Treasure said he was an imitation Obi man; but the Doctor opined the thing must be a dancing bear. It certainly was dancing, in shuffling, cumbrous measures, and all the people sang a plaintive dirge to it, and beat time with clapping of hands.



"'HE'S NOT A REAL OBI MAN.'"

"Mind you, he's not a real Obi man," explained the Treasure; "the real ones are very rare, and wouldn't come out in a crowd and give themselves away like that. They are nothing if not mysterious."

Horribly inane were the masks of the women. Each was modelled on the same pattern—blue, staring eyes, delicately pencilled eyebrows, small crimson mouths. The idea they are intended to convey is that the masquer is of European stock, and the negresses aid this harmless deception by carefully covering up every atom of their black skins with stockings, boots, gloves, and other unusual articles of apparel. They also conceal their heads, ears and necks in turbans and handkerchiefs. Thus disguised, it would be difficult for strangers, unfamiliar with the free negro walk, to tell what colour these girls were; but from behind every pink mask, giving the lie direct to its blue eyes and rosebud mouth, there came a whining, giggling, screaming negress's voice—a vocal effort not to be confounded with any other. But many men, as well as women, trusted entirely to noise, and some blended vocal and instrumental music with far-reaching results. Strong arms and strong lungs, and a big drum,

and an utter absence of self-consciousness, will produce assertive and searching effects which simply command attention from the most casual spectator. Large numbers of the men were attired in feminine costume, and their efforts to extract fun from that circumstance lacked good taste. Women also often dressed as men.

But, taking that great, excited, hot-blooded crowd as a whole, it must be declared the result was good and gratifying. The greater number behaved very decently, and there were no flagrant violations of the general principles of propriety. The display was characterised by an universal, eighteen-carat idiotcy, but really nothing worse than that. In proportion to their advantages, the people behaved better than a similar number of the uncultured, under similar circumstances, would have behaved at home—on Hampstead Heath or elsewhere.

"THE PACE WILL QUICKEN A GOOD DEAL AFTER NIGHTFALL."

Those who know tell me that the pace will quicken a good deal after nightfall. I suppose so. That is a sign of civilisation. The country that makes no attempt to quicken its pace after nightfall is behind the times. Why was man permitted to discover gas and electric light? In order that he might turn night into day, of course The Martinique folks have neither gas nor electricity, but much may be managed with lanterns and a tropical moon. They will do their best, according to their lights. For my part, I know many people who are nothing, either physically or intellectually, by day. They need the stimulant of artificial light and other things to develop their latent splendours. I myself have decidedly nocturnal instincts. But one may stop out even into the small hours, and yet be a good man. These Martinique masqueraders will all stay up late; and yet they are doubtless good Roman Catholics, and have all purchased dispensations. Of course, if one can buy permission to quicken the pace occasionally, and commit any little pet peccadillo for a merely nominal outlay, it makes it very easy to be good between-times.

But all the religions which men have died in, and all the

noblest human institutions also, trust for their very existence to human frailties, to human errors, and negligences and ignorances. Complicated wickedness is the backbone of art and politics, and everything that gives a flavour to life. The learned professions depend entirely upon it. Still, the world continues to advance. Before long, ignorance will be the only crime recognised; and probably we shall find, if we have not yet found, that it is the matrix of all the others. Yes, I clearly foresee a condition of perfect, universal, intelligent, slightly insipid goodness; but not whilst you and I live.

We visited the cathedral before leaving Martinique. The decorations and adornments of it were well-nigh as garish and vulgar as the Carnival outside. Why do Roman Catholics fill their places of worship with painted images and wedding-cake ornaments, and bad art and rubbish? These things cannot beget noble thoughts in the souls of even the most humble and uncultured. Fate is a bitter satirist, and laughs, no doubt, to see mankind worshipping the God of Truth in a specially sanctified atmosphere of false marble, false stained glass, false flowers, false silver and gold. But we must not pry under the veneer, or dare to criticise the coarseness of it all, because excellent, well-meaning people will call down fire from Heaven if we do. Still, as I said before, the world continues to advance.

We presently returned to our ship, and found that a numerous company of deck-passengers—negroes and French—had arrived. They were proceeding to Dominica, Guadeloupe, and other islands, and they showed a strong inclination to continue their Carnival delights on board. But this undertaking the weather and the Captain nipped in the bud. For the sea grew rough and unsettling to the negro system, and our commander declared that anybody found screaming, dancing, or otherwise conducting himself in an unseamanlike fashion should be instantly put in irons.

That night I leant over our vessel's bulwarks and saw a dark ocean afire with the cold gleam of phosphorescence. The water foamed away from the ship's side full of wan light, splashed here and there with silver sparks.

The Doctor approached me, and together we admired the sight, and watched a vast fish forging along, clearly outlined in the phosphorus below. Suddenly a thought struck my brother. He said:

"By Jove! that fish shall have it!"

Then he drew something from his pocket and flung it down into the sea before the fish.

"What have you done?" I cried. "See! the finny monster grows uncomfortable; he lashes with his tail, he churns the depths of the Caribbean Sea as it were soda water; he vanishes, much agitated, into the dark night."

The Doctor said:

"Yes, he's done a thing that might agitate anybody; he's eaten my false nose—I thought he would."

"'BY JOVE! THAT FISH SHALL HAVE IT!'"

Two Glacier Accidents.

By Francis Gribble.

Illustrations by the Misses Hammond.

"ATTRACTIVE TO THE AVERAGE YOUNG MAN."

THIS story began at a subscription dance on Richmond Hill, and ended on the Gorner Glacier in the Zermatt Valley; but the things that happened at Richmond only need to be told by way of prologue.

It was at the subscription dance on Richmond Hill that Herbert Meredith first met Edith Curzon. Finding he liked her better than the other girls he knew, he fluttered about her sufficiently to attract the attention of a row of lynx-eyed chaperons—her own and others. In due course there followed other dances, and sundry river-picnics and tennis-parties, at which the fluttering continued, attracting more attention from more chaperons, until Herbert found, or fancied, that his wings were singed. Turning the situation over in his mind he came to the conclusion that he was in love. On this hypothesis he dutifully proposed marriage, and was accepted, and went about telling his friends, without the least intention of deceiving them, that he was the happiest man in the world.

It could hardly have ended happily in any case, even if it had ended conventionally. Edith was pretty and everything that is attractive to the average young man, but she was not—though at first neither of them knew it—the one woman in the world who could keep Herbert's love as well as win it. Herbert had once or twice suspected that in the course of a three months' engagement. He was quite sure of it when Blanche Marsden came into his story and complicated it.

Blanche was Edith's cousin, and she came, innocent of any tragic purpose, to stay with Edith at the Laurels. She came, unfortunately, at the psychological moment when Herbert was just beginning to be embarrassed by the discovery that he was less

passionately attached to Edith than he ought to be, and, indeed, had been when three months since he took her out into the conservatory and told his love. It is said that even the happiest marriages are sometimes preluded by such a cooling of devotion. Only, as is obvious, it must not go too far; and in Herbert's case it went so far that he found presently, to his further embarrassment, that Blanche was all the world to him, and that he loved Edith only "as a sister"—or perhaps not quite so well. And Blanche loved Herbert.

"TOOK HER OUT INTO THE CONSERVATORY."

It is a perfectly common-place situation, but none the less tragic upon that account. It has only three possible solutions—disloyalty, self-sacrifice, or suicide. Which is the correct one is a point about which casuists are at loggerheads, only agreeing that, to the average temperament, they all are disagreeable.

Herbert, after many meditations and soliloquies, decided on the middle course.

Edith loved him, and would be heart-broken if he left her. Edith was poor, and would have to earn her living as a governess, or a typewriter, or something equally unpleasant, if the engagement were broken off. His word was pledged to Edith. Therefore he would marry Edith.

Excellent logic this, but requiring as one of its secondary conclusions that he should keep out of the way of temptation by avoiding Blanche.

"YOU MUST MARRY EDITH."

This he meant to do, but did not. The consequence was that the new passion which he had thought to hide, if not to smother, suddenly flashed out one day in spite of him.

Blanche was a loyal friend, and checked him.

"No, no," she said—though the effort cost her much—"no,

no. You belong to Edith. Yes, I know you love me, and I love you, love you dearly, but you must be true to Edith. You must marry Edith."

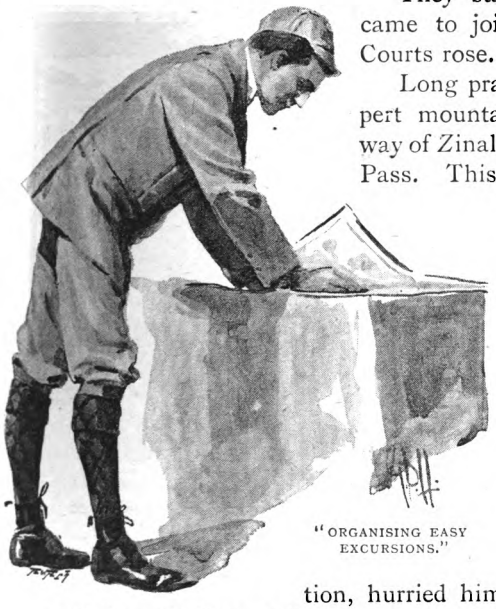
So Herbert, feeling that she was right, tried to resign himself, and lay awake at nights wondering what the end would be.

And the end was an accident on the Gorner Glacier in the Zermatt Valley.

* * * * *

They were all staying at the little hotel that Alexander Seiler built on the Riffelberg, eight thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea.

Blanche, of course, had no business to be there. She knew that Herbert was expected, and it was very wrong of her to come. But her aunt, Mrs. Maitland, had invited her, and the invitation was very pressing, and she—well, she came.



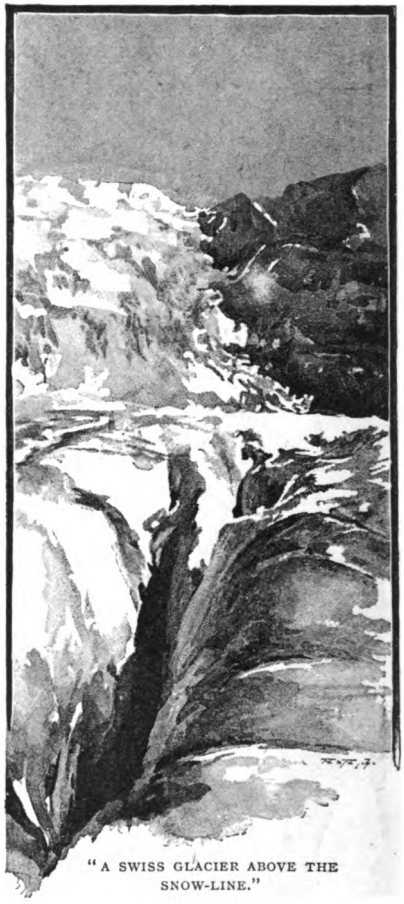
"ORGANISING EASY EXCURSIONS."

They started alone, and Herbert came to join them when the Law Courts rose.

Long practice had made him an expert mountaineer, so he came in by way of Zinal, over the perilous Moming Pass. This is a place where great ice avalanches fall every day, and, perhaps, being in a desperate mood, he would not have taken it amiss if one of them had opportunely crushed him, and so solved his problem. But his guides, having wives and families dependent on them, and no moral problems clamouring for such summary solution, hurried him past the point of danger, and brought him safely to the Schwarz See, and hence, the next morning, he tramped over to the Riffel, there to do his duty in organising easy excursions for the ladies of his party.

Both of them climbed well, though not like gymnasts or Alpinists. They did not, like so many, imagine that they had "done Zermatt" when they had seen the sun rise from the

Gorner Grat, crimsoning the white snows of Monte Rosa and the Lyskamm, or content themselves, in the matter of ascents, with that calumniated "ladies' mountain," the Mettelhorn. On the contrary, they scrambled audaciously along the narrow ridge of the Hohthäligrat, and clambered up the giddy places of the Riffelhorn, showing no fear even on that awkward ledge where the guide always stops his "Herren" to tell them that "this is where the English gentleman slipped and killed himself." Finally, nothing would satisfy them but a long day on the higher parts of the Gorner Glacier.



"A SWISS GLACIER ABOVE THE SNOW-LINE."

"The lower part," Edith said, "is too ridiculously easy. Take us up above the Seracs, where the snow is, and never mind about a guide."

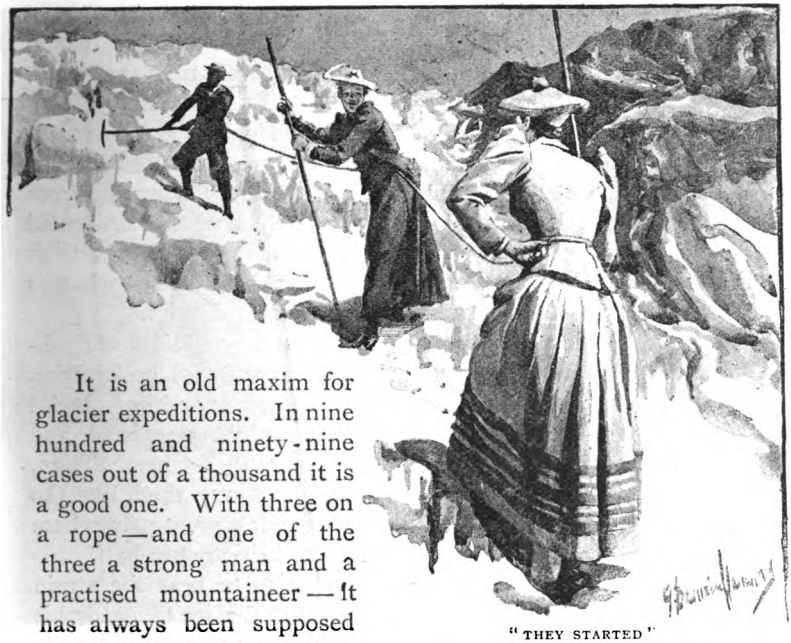
Herbert, believing himself, not without some reason, to be as good as any guide, promised readily, and they agreed to start at daybreak.

No pictures—not even Loppé's, which are the best—give quite an adequate idea of what an Alpine glacier is really like. People who have never seen one are apt to picture them as level plains of ice. That is wrong; it is only the effect they give when looked at from a distance. Imagine, rather, that the sea, on the stormiest day you can remember, has, with all its irregular undulations, been suddenly transformed into a mass of solid frozen snow. Imagine these rolling billows of hard snow intersected here and there by broad cracks, dropping down into blue profundities that the eye cannot fathom. Fancy further a quantity of fresh, half-melted snow covering up and hiding these crevasses, ready to give way when you tread on it, and precipitate you into cavernous abysses. Picture all these things, and you will have

a fairly accurate idea of a Swiss glacier above the snow-line.

Down on to just such a glacier Herbert Meredith went, that August morning, with the woman he loved and the woman he was to marry.

"Don't be frightened," he said, noticing that they looked a little timid, "we must put on the rope, and then, if you are careful to keep it tight all the time, there won't be the slightest danger."



"THEY STARTED"

It is an old maxim for glacier expeditions. In nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand it is a good one. With three on a rope—and one of the three a strong man and a practised mountaineer—it has always been supposed that there is, in fair weather, absolute safety in crossing even the most crevassed of glaciers. Only since the accident of that 25th of August have people begun to have their doubts upon the point.

Herbert had made the rope fast round the waists of his two companions, and then round his own. It was a new rope, bought that same year in London from the dealers recommended by the Alpine Club, and he was quite sure that it would not break.

Then they started. He led the way himself, sounding the snow in front of him with his ice-axe, to make sure that it would bear his weight. Edith followed at a distance of six or seven yards; Blanche was the same distance behind Edith. Thus, if one fell

into a crevasse, the other two would be able to hold up the weight.

On they toiled for hours through the snowy solitudes, till they nearly reached the summit of the New Weiss Thor. They paused for a while to drink Yvorne and eat Gruyère cheese, and admire the matchless scenery which one has to neglect so shamefully when passing points where hidden dangers may be lurking. Refreshed and rested, they put on the rope again and started homewards. On the way home the accident happened.

It was about one o'clock in the afternoon. Not a cloud was in the sky; scarcely a breath of wind was stirring in the valley. The sun blazed down with a heat almost incredible in those regions of eternal ice, melting the surface snow so that, every now and again, they plunged into it up to their knees.

Still keeping the same order, and still taking the same precautions, they followed, so far as possible, the track they had taken in the morning. But the conformation of a glacier varies from hour to hour, and presently they found themselves confronted with a great yawning gap which forced them to change their route. They did so, and their new path led them across what is doubtless the widest crevasse in all the Zermatt district.

Like the rest, it was covered and concealed by a bridge of fresh-fallen snow. Herbert's ice-axe detected no sign of hollowness. Therefore, by all the laws of ice-craft it should bear him. It did so, but he was a heavy man, and his weight weakened and loosened it. Edith followed, loosening it still further. Then, suddenly, there was a shriek of terror, and a heavy thud, like the sound of a distant avalanche, and Herbert felt a great pain where the rope ran round him, as though he were being cut in half.

Leaning forward with all his might, so as to bear the strain better, and grinding the point of his axe into the ice to steady his foot-hold, he looked round over his shoulder to see what had happened.

What had happened was almost the worst thing that could have happened. Almost before Edith had crossed the bridge, it had given way under Blanche's weight. Edith lay helpless on the side of the abyss, with her head just drawn over the edge. Blanche was dangling at the end of the rope some six or seven yards below her. The weight of the two rested upon Herbert. He pulled with all his strength, but could not move them. If anything he lost an inch or two in the effort.

Then he called:

"Blanche!"

The answer came faintly:

"Yes, Herbert."

"Have you got your ice-axe?"

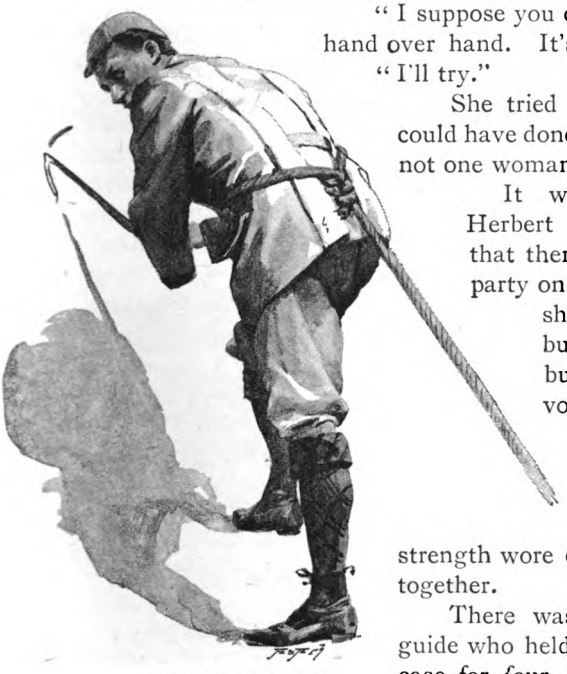
"No, I've dropped it."

"If I lower you Edith's can you cut steps up the side?"

"No. The crevasse overhangs, and I can't reach the wall."

"I suppose you can't climb up the rope hand over hand. It's the only way."

"I'll try."



"HE LOOKED ROUND."

She tried and failed. Few men could have done such a thing; certainly not one woman in ten thousand.

It was the last chance. Herbert jödelled, in the hope that there might be some other party on the glacier within ear-shot, though out of sight; but there came no answer but the echo of his own voice from the mountain walls. There was nothing for it but to set his teeth and wait, and then, when his strength wore out, for them all to die together.

There was once a Grindlewald guide who held up two men in such a case for four hours, until help came to him—but he was the giant of the Bernese Oberland, and Herbert had only the muscle and endurance of the ordinary young English athlete.

Ten minutes passed, only broken by an occasional desperate and unavailing shout for help. The pain across his chest was terrible. He had lost another inch or two of ground, and he felt that his strength must soon fail him altogether. Still he stood firm, hoping against hope.

Five minutes more passed. The pain was more agonising than ever. If it had been only his own life that had been at stake, he would not have tried to keep up the struggle any longer. For Blanche's sake he still hung on.

Presently, fainter than ever, Blanche's voice came up from the hollow:

"Herbert."

"Yes, Blanche."

"Is there any hope? Is anyone in sight?"

"No; not yet. But I'll try and hold on a bit longer."

There was a pause for a few seconds. Then she spoke again:

"It's all right now, Herbert."

He wondered, and half guessed, what she meant.

"A FREE USE OF THE BRANDY FLASK."

Before he could speak in protest, she went on—and this time there was a passion in her tones which he had only heard once before—

"Good-bye, Herbert. Good-bye, my own darling."

Then the strain suddenly slackened, enabling him to pull Edith up into a place of safety, and he heard the heavy thud of a falling body, and knew that she had cut the rope to save him.

* * * * *

It was a hard business and a dangerous one bringing Edith home that day. She wanted to faint, would have fainted, only that she was so terribly afraid. But the thing had to be done, and,

by the favour of fortune and a free use of the brandy flask, at last it was done.

Soon after seven o'clock they got back to the Riffel-haus. Herbert only waited there a few minutes. He sent his flask in to the bureau to be refilled, but did not stay to eat or rest. In as few words as he could, he told his story to the guides who gathered round him. The guides fetched lanterns, ropes, and a ladder, and he started with them at once to direct them in the search for the dead body.

It is slow work finding your way about a glacier by lamplight. The landmarks look so different at night, especially when, as on that night, there is no moon. At last, however, some time after midnight, after much anxious searching, they found the spot they were looking for.

One of the men was let down carefully into the crevasse. Herbert stood with the rest upon the edge, hoping and fearing, but fearing far more than he hoped.

There was, of course, just one faint chance. There might have been a ledge of ice placed so as to break her fall. She might be lying there, frost-bitten and unconscious, but still alive.

It was a faint hope and a false one. After much patient groping the guide found the body, and his companions drew it up. The eyes were glazed; there was a clot of frozen blood upon the lips; and the heart had ceased to beat. But, at least, she had not suffered. Death, it was quite clear, had been instantaneous.

The rope went down into the gulf again, and this time the guide—old Christian Summermatter—came back with it.

"Herr," he said, and Herbert stepped apart from the rest to speak with him—

"Herr, I found in the lady's hand, frozen to her fingers, this knife."

Herbert took it from him, and he went on—

"And, Herr, I also found, lying close beside the lady, this long piece of string."

Herbert started.

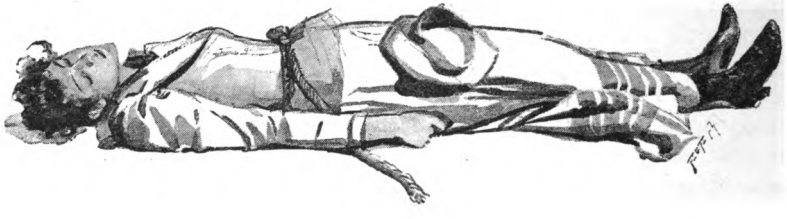
"Quick. Bring me a light," he cried.

Christian fetched one of the lanterns. By its light Herbert looked at the knife with which Blanche Marsden had cut the rope. Scratched upon the handle he read the words, "Edith Curzon."

He understood now the meaning of old Christian's discovery. Unwilling to cut the rope herself, which would be murder, Edith had, quietly, without his knowledge, lowered Blanche the knife, that Blanche might do so.

"My God!"

That is all he said. As he spoke he staggered backwards. The crevasse was very near, and he did not try to save himself. So there were two glacier accidents that day, and the next morning the guides brought two dead bodies home instead of one.



The American Claimant.

By MARK TWAIN.

Illustrated by Hal Hurst.

"'I WANT TO MAKE A CONFESSION.'"

CHAPTER XV.

TRACY was down in the lowest depths of despair, now; for the harder Barrow tried to find work for him the more hopeless the possibilities seemed to grow. At last he said to Barrow:

"Look here. I want to make a confession. I have been allowing you to wear yourself out hunting for work for me when there's been a chance open to me all the time. Forgive my pride. It is all gone now, and I've come to confess that if those ghastly artists want another confederate, I'm their man."

"No? Really, can you paint?"

"Not as badly as *they*. No, I don't claim that, for I am not a genius; in fact, I am a very indifferent amateur, a slouchy dabster, a mere artistic sarcasm; but drunk or asleep I can beat *those* buccaneers."

"Shake! Come right along, we'll hunt the old boys up."

The freebooters were not at home. But their "works" were, displayed in profusion all about the little ratty studio. Cannon to the right of them, cannon to the left of them, cannon in front—it was Balaclava come again.

"Here's the uncontented hackman, Tracy. Buckle to, deepen the seagreen to turf, turn the ship into a hearse. Let the boys have a taste of your quality."

The artists arrived just as the last touch was put on. They stood transfixed with admiration.

"My souls, but she's a stunner, that hearse! The hackman will just go all to pieces when he sees that; won't he, Andy?"

"Oh, it's sphlennid, sphlennid! Herr Tracy, why haf you not

said you vas a so sublime aartist? Lob' Gott, of you had lit'd in Paris you would be a Pree de Rome, dot's vot's de matter!"

The arrangements were soon made. Tracy was taken into full and equal partnership, and he went straight to work with dash and energy. Under his hand, artillery disappeared, and the emblems of peace and commerce took its place—cats, hacks, sausages, tugs, fire engines, pianos, guitars, rocks, gardens, flowerpots, landscapes, whatever was wanted, he flung it in. The pirates were delighted, the customers applauded, the sex began to flock in, great was the prosperity of the firm.

"HE WENT STRAIGHT TO WORK."

The unqualified member from Cherokee Strip was in a state of deep dejection. For a good while now, he had been leading a sort of life which was calculated to kill; for it had consisted in regularly alternating days of brilliant hope and black disappointment. The brilliant hopes were created by the magician Sellers, and they always promised that *now* he had got the trick, sure, and would effectively influence that materialized cowboy to call at the Towers before night. The black disappointments consisted in the persistent and monotonous failure of these prophecies.

At the date which this history has now reached, Sellers was appalled to find that the usual remedy was inoperative, and that Hawkins's low spirits refused absolutely to lift. Something must be done, he reflected; he must be cheered up. He mused a while, then he saw his way. He said, in his most conspicuously casual vein—

"Er—uh—by the way, Hawkins, we are feeling disappointed about this thing—the way the materializee is acting, I mean—we are disappointed; you concede that?"

"Concede it? Why, yes, if you like the term."

"Very well. When you've found out the source of a disease, you've also found out what remedy is required—just

as in this case. In this case money is required. And *only* money."

"MONEY IS REQUIRED."

The old, old seduction was in that airy, confident tone. The old answering signs of faith and hope showed up in Hawkins's countenance, and he said—

"*Only* money? Do you mean that you know a way to——"

"Washington, have you the impression that I have no resources but those I allow the public and my intimate friends to know about? Have you ever been in my laboratory?"

"Why, no."

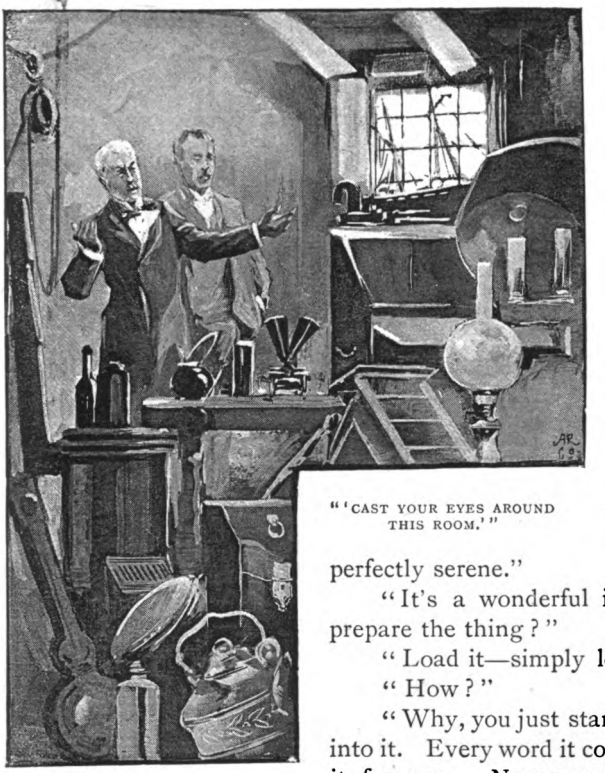
"That's it. You see you didn't even know that I had one. Come along. I've got a little trick there that I want to show you. I've kept it perfectly quiet, not fifty people know anything about it. But that's always been my way. Wait till you're *ready*, that's the idea; and *when* you're ready, zip!—let her go!"

Arrived in the "laboratory," the earl continued, "Now, cast your eye around this room—what do you see? *Apparently*, a junk-shop; *apparently*, a hospital connected with a patent office—in *reality*, the mines of Golconda, in disguise! Look at that thing there. Now, what would you take that thing to be?"

"I don't believe I could ever imagine."

"Of course you couldn't. It's my grand adaptation of the phonograph to the marine service. You store up profanity in it for use at sea. You know that sailors don't fly around worth a cent unless you swear at them—so the mate that can do the best

job of swearing is the most valuable man. In great emergencies his talent saves the ship. But a ship is a large thing, and he can't be everywhere at once; so there have been times when one mate has lost a ship which could have been saved if they had had a hundred. Well, a ship can't afford a hundred mates; but she can afford a hundred cursing phonographs, and distribute them all over the vessel. Imagine a big storm, and a hundred of my machines all cursing away at once—splendid spectacle, splendid! Ship goes through that storm perfectly serene."



"'CAST YOUR EYES AROUND THIS ROOM.'"

"It's a wonderful idea. How do you prepare the thing?"

"Load it—simply load it."

"How?"

"Why, you just stand over it and swear into it. Every word it collars it *keeps*—keeps it for ever. Never wears out. Any time you turn the crank, out it'll come. In times of great peril you can reverse it, and it'll swear backwards. *That* makes a sailor hump himself."

"Oh, I see. Who loads them—the mate?"

"Yes, if he chooses. Or I'll furnish them already loaded. I can hire an expert for $75 a month who will load a hundred and fifty phonographs in 150 hours, and do it *easy*. Then, you see, all the ships of the world will buy them ready loaded, for I shall have them loaded in any language a customer wants. Hawkins, it will work the grandest moral reform of the 19th century. Five years from now *all* the swearing will be done by machinery. You won't ever hear a profane word come from human lips on a

ship. Now I'll show you how it works. I had an expert come and load this one up yesterday. Hallo, it's been left open—it's too bad. Still, I reckon it hasn't had much chance to collect irrelevant stuff. All you do is to press this button to the floor—so."

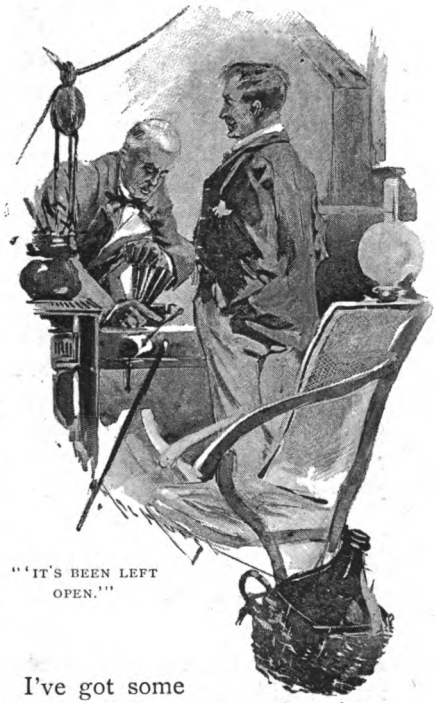
The phonograph began to sing in a plaintive voice:

"There is a boarding-house,
far, far away,
Where they have ham and eggs
three times a day."

"Hang it, *that* ain't it. Somebody's been singing around here."

The plaintive song began again, mingled with a low, gradually rising wail of cats slowly warming up towards a fight:

"Oh, how those boarders yell,
When they hear that dinner bell!
They gave that landlord——"
(Momentary outburst of terrific cat-fight.)
"Three times a day."
(Renewal of furious cat-fight. The plaintive voice on a high, fierce key, "*Scat*, you devils!"—and a racket as of flying missiles.)



"'IT'S BEEN LEFT OPEN.'"

"Well, never mind—let it go. I've got some sailor-profanity down in there somewhere, if I could get to it. But it isn't any matter; you see how the machine works."

Hawkins responded with enthusiasm—

"Oh, it works admirably! I know there's a hundred fortunes in it."

"And mind, the Hawkins family get their share, Washington.'

"Oh, thanks, thanks; you are just as generous as ever. Ah, it's the grandest invention of the age!"

"Ah, well, we live in wonderful times. The elements are crowded full of beneficent forces. Why, Hawkins, *everything* is useful—*nothing* ought ever to be wasted. Now, look at sewer-gas, for instance. Sewer-gas has always been wasted, heretofore; nobody tried to save up sewer-gas—you can't name me a man."

"Yes, it is so—but I never—er—I don't quite see why a body——"

"Should *want* to save it up? Well, I'll tell you. Do you see this little invention here?—it's a decomposer. If you show me a house that produces a given quantity of sewer-gas in a day, I'll engage to set up my decomposer there and make that house produce a hundred times that quantity of sewer-gas in less than half-an-hour."

"Dear me, but why should you want to?"

"*Want* to? My boy, for illuminating purposes and economy combined, there's nothing in the world that begins with sewer-gas. And really, it don't cost a cent. You put in a good inferior article of plumbing—such as you find everywhere—and add my decomposer, and there you are. Why, major, in five years from now you won't see a house lighted with anything but sewer-gas. Every physician I talk to recommends it, and every plumber."

"Have you given it a trial?"

"Well, no, not a first rate one. Polly's prejudiced, and she won't let me put it in here; but I'm playing my cards to get it adopted in the President's house, and *then* it'll go—don't you doubt it. I shall not need this one for the present, Washington; you may take it down to some boarding-house and give it a trial if you like."

CHAPTER XVI.

Washington shuddered slightly at the suggestion, then his face took on a dreamy look, and he dropped into a trance of thought. After a little while Sellers asked him what he was grinding in his mental mill.

"Well, this. Have you got some secret project in your head which requires a Bank of England back of it to make it succeed?"

"Why, Hawkins, are you a mind reader?"

"I? I never thought of such a thing."

"Well, then, how did you happen to drop on to that idea in this curious fashion. It's just mind reading, that's what it is. I *have* got a private project that requires a Bank of England at its back. What was the process?"

"There wasn't any process. A thought like this happened to slip through my head by accident. How much would make you or me comfortable? A hundred thousand. Yet you are expecting two or three of these inventions of yours to turn out some billions of money—and you are *wanting* them to do that. There must be a definite project back of that somewhere."

"It's wonderfully reasoned out, Washington; it certainly is. Now I'll tell you the whole thing. Have you noticed how many pamphlets and books I've got lying around relating to Russia?"

"Yes, I think most anybody would notice that—anybody who wasn't dead."

"Well, I've been posting myself a good while. That's a great and splendid nation, and deserves to be set free." He paused, then added, in a quite matter-of-fact way, "When I get this money I'm going to set it free."

"Great guns!"

"Well, I've looked the ground over, and concluded that the methods of the Russian patriots, while good enough considering the way the boys are hampered, are not the best; at least not the quickest. They are trying to revolutionize Russia from *within;* that's pretty slow, you know, and liable to interruption all the time, and is full of perils for the workers. Do you know how Peter the Great started his army? He didn't start it on the family premises under the noses of the Strelitzes; no, he started it away off yonder, privately—only just one regiment, you know, and he built to *that.* The first thing the Strelitzes knew, the regiment was an *army*, their position was turned. Just that little idea *made* the biggest and worst of all the despotisms the world has seen. The same idea can *un*make it."

"This is mighty interesting, Rossmore. What is it you are going to do?"

"I am going to buy Siberia, and start a republic. I don't care what the price is, I can afford it. There's Siberia with just the very finest and choicest material on the globe for a republic, and more coming—more coming all the time. It is being daily, weekly, monthly recruited by the most perfectly-devised system that has ever been invented, perhaps. By this system the whole of the hundred millions of Russia are being constantly and patiently sifted, sifted, sifted by myriads of trained experts, spies appointed by the Emperor personally; and whenever they catch a man, woman, or child that has got any brains or education, or character, they ship that person straight to Siberia. The minute I organize that republic, the light of liberty, intelligence, justice, humanity, bursting from it, flooding from it, flaming from it, will concentrate the gaze of the whole astonished world as upon the miracle of a new sun. Russia's countless multitude of slaves will rise up and march, march!—eastward, with that great light transfiguring their faces as they come, and far back of them you will see—what will

you see?—a vacant throne in an empty land! It can be done, and by God I'll——"

The earl stopped suddenly, his frame stiffened, and he began to stare speechless through the curtainless window. Then he pointed, and gasped out a single rapturous word—

"Look!"

"What is it, Colonel?"

"*It!*"

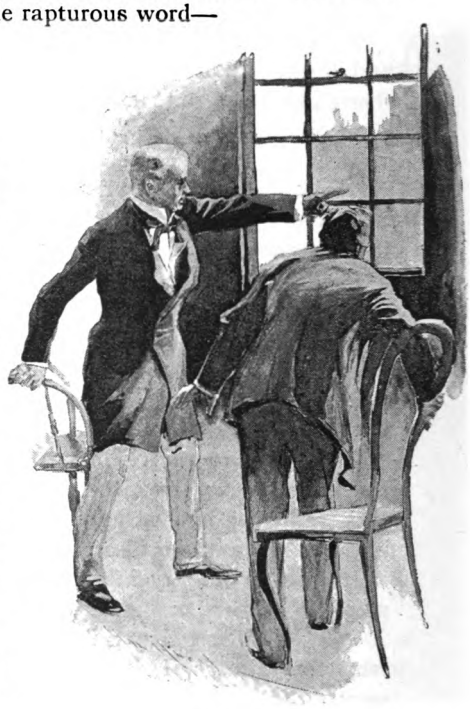
"No."

"Sure as you're born. Keep perfectly still. I'll apply the influence—I'll turn on all my force. I've brought it thus far, I'll fetch it right into the house. You'll see."

He was making all sorts of passes in the air with his hands.

"There! Look at that. I've made it smile! See?"

Quite true. Tracy, out for an afternoon stroll, had come unexpectantly upon his family arms displayed upon this shabby house-front. The hatchments made him smile, which was nothing—they had made the neighborhood cats do that.



"'LOOK!'"

"Look, Hawkins, look! I'm drawing it over!"

"You're drawing it, sure, Rossmore. If I ever had any doubts about materialization, they're gone now, and gone for good. Oh, this is a joyful day!"

Tracy was sauntering over to read the door-plate. Before he was half-way over he was saying to himself, "Why, manifestly, these are the American Claimant's quarters."

"It's coming—coming right along. I'll slide down and pull it in."

Sellers, pale and a good deal agitated, opened the door and confronted Tracy. The old man could not at once get his voice; then he pumped out a scattering and hardly coherent salutation, and followed it with—

"Walk in, walk right in, Mr.—er——"

"Tracy—Howard Tracy."

"Tracy—thanks; walk right in, you're expected."

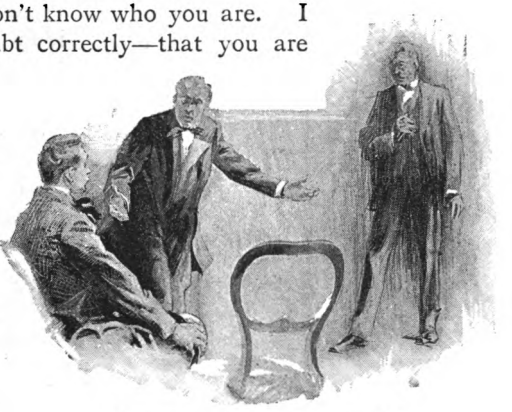
Tracy entered, considerably puzzled, and said—

"Expected? I think there must be some mistake."

"Oh, I judge not," said Sellers, who, noticing Hawkins, gave him a sidewise glance intended to call his close attention to a dramatic effect which he was proposing to produce by his next remark. Then he said, slowly and impressively—"I am—*you know who.*"

To the astonishment of both conspirators, the remark produced no dramatic effect at all; for the new comer responded with a quite innocent and unembarrassed air—

"No, pardon me. I don't know who you are. I only suppose—but no doubt correctly—that you are the gentleman whose title is on the door-plate."



"'MY FRIEND, GENERAL HAWKINS.'"

"Right, quite right—sit down, pray sit down." The earl was rattled, thrown off his bearings, his head was in a whirl. Then he noticed Hawkins standing apart and staring idiotically at what to him was the apparition of a defunct man, and a new idea was born to him. He said to Tracy, briskly—

"But a thousand pardons, dear sir. Let me introduce my friend, General Hawkins—General Hawkins, our new Senator—Senator from the latest and grandest addition to the radiant galaxy of sovereign States, Cherokee Strip"—(to himself, "That name will shrivel him up!" But it didn't, in the least, and the Colonel resumed the introduction piteously disheartened and amazed)—"Senator Hawkins, Mr. Howard Tracy, of—er——"

"England."

"England! Why that's im——"

"England, yes, native of England."

"Recently from there?"

"Yes, quite recently."

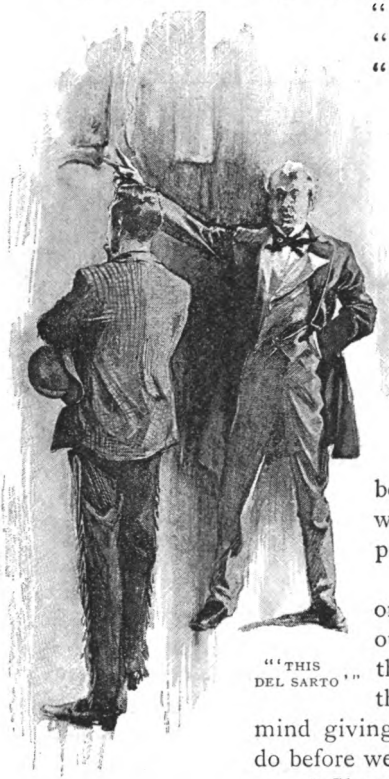
Said the Colonel to himself, "This phantom lies like an expert.

Then aloud—with deep irony—"I suppose you find that travelling in the majestic expanses of our Far West is——"

"I haven't been West, and haven't been devoting myself to amusement with any sort of exclusiveness, I assure you. In fact, to merely live, an artist has got to work, not play."

"Artist!" said Hawkins to himself, thinking of the rifled bank; "that *is* a name for it!"

"Are *you* an artist?" asked the Colonel; and added, to himself, "*now* I'm going to catch him."



"'THIS DEL SARTO'"

"In a humble way, yes."

"What line?" pursued the sly veteran.

"Oils."

"I've got him!" said Sellers to himself. Then aloud, "This is fortunate. Could I engage you to restore some of my paintings that need that attention?"

"I shall be very glad. Pray let me see them."

No shuffling, no evasion, no embarrassment, even under this crucial test. The Colonel was nonplussed. He led Tracy to a chromo which had suffered damage in a former owner's hands, through being used as a lamp mat, and said, with a flourish of his hand toward the picture—

"This del Sarto is perhaps the only original of that sublime master in our country. You see, yourself, that the work is of such exceeding delicacy that the risk—could—er—would you mind giving me a little example of what you can do before we——"

"Cheerfully, cheerfully. I will copy one of these marvels."

Water-colour materials—relics of Miss Sally's college life—were brought. Tracy said he was better in oils, but would take a chance with these. So he was left alone. He began his work, but the attractions of the place were too strong for him, and he got up and went drifting about, fascinated, also amazed.

(To be continued.)

Position.

By J. F. Sullivan.

Mr. C. Lect.—"Ah—yaas—we have to be a little particular as to whom we admit to our club. We like to keep it select. We have some good people in it—there's the Duke of Loftinoze, and Lord Snorter, and Lord Biggepott—in fact, I may say I'm the—ah—the only untitled member in it."

Mr. Ornery.—"Ah—I see—don't admit anyone below the position of a Tufthunter."

Per Express.

By Archie Fairbairn. Illustrated by A. H. Fisher.

HERE we are, Billy, this is my pot-house,
I can't say it's much of a club;
But I wasn't brought up in a hot-house,
Though I don't care to drink at a pub.

"Why don't I belong to a better?"
Well, here I see more of my friends,
Drop in, read a book, write a letter,
And am handy if anyone sends.

No, I don't find that
doctoring's paying,
I've piled up no dollars
like you;

There's an opening out West,
you were saying,
For a medico;—
how should I do?

Could a man combine
farming with stanching
Of wounds from revolver
and
knife?

Should I take, as you have, Bill,
to ranching,
And rough it the rest of
my life?

You've not come back a regular Yankee,
Though you've got a slight twang in your tone
When you speak, for you're silent (yes, thank 'ee,
The matches!) from living alone.

You'll run down and see my old father,
And Nellie, and mother, and all?

Do I think they remember you?—rather,
Nellie does, I am sure; she's grown tall,

And is hardly the child you remember,
In the days when you called her "the limb,"
When we cut that big slide one December,
And the summer you taught her to swim.

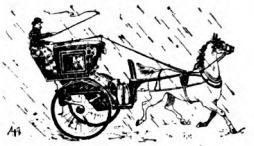
Why, talking of swimming, last season
She saved a girl's life at Torquay,
And I really believe that's the reason
(Mind, this is between you and me)
That a fellow called White, who was staying
Down there at the time, fell in love—
Dropped your glass?—never mind—I was saying,
I fancy he'll soon tell the "gov."

For he's going for a fortnight to Dorset,

To the Fawcetts, who live just in sight

Of our gates, and says he and old Fawcett

Are to dine with my people to-night.



I saw him just now, he was driving

To the station full pelt in the rain ;

Poor devil ! he must now be arriving

Twenty minutes too soon for his train.

Lovers always are eager, eh, Billy ?

Hi, waiter—my friend ! has he gone ?

Hall porter, don't gape like a silly !

"In a cab, sir, jumped in all alone."

Gone off—why he's gone, for a fiver,

Down home to race White for our Nell.

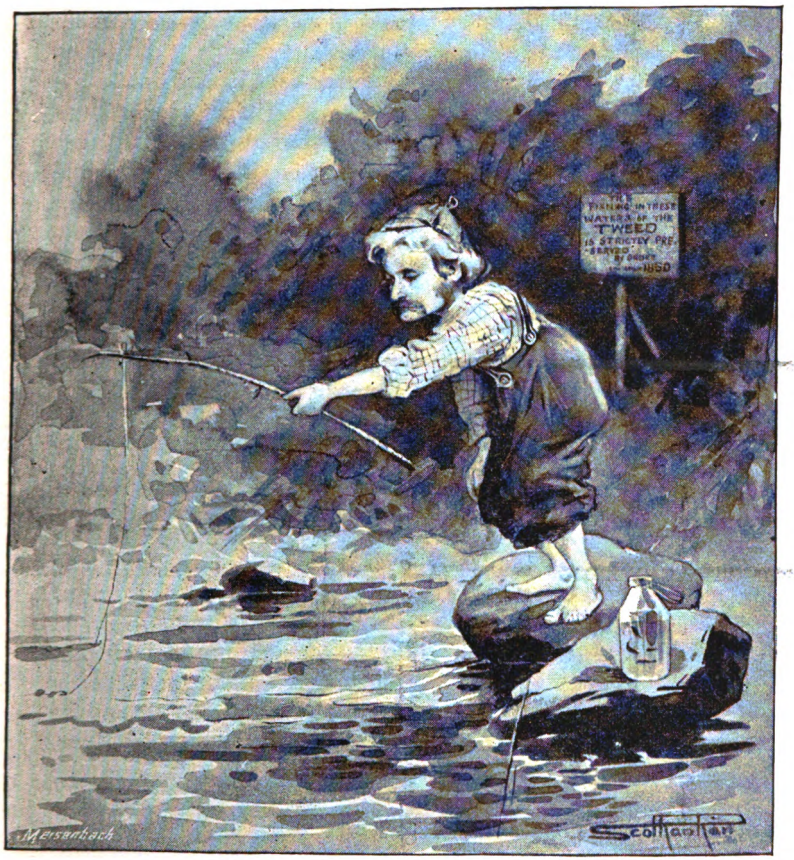
Did you hear what he said to the driver ?

"Yes, he said—'Waterloo,' sir, 'like ——.'"

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

ANDREW LANG.



"Within the streams, Pausanias saith,
That down Cocytus valley flow,
Girdling the grey domain of Death,
The spectral fishes come and go;

The ghosts of trout flit to and fro.
Persephone, fulfil my wish,
And grant that in the shades below
My ghost may land the ghosts of fish."

ANDREW LANG.

The Idlers' Club.

The talk on pleasant idling places is continued. Clement Scott speaks of Poppyland as it was.

"What a fool you were ever to let a human being into the secret of your beloved Cromer. Why could you not let it alone? Why on earth did you not keep it to yourself?" These are the jeering and taunting remarks that are hurled every summer at my offending head. Instead of being a benefactor to the human race, instead of being allowed to pride myself on my own unselfishness, I am, I regret to say, looked upon as a tainted or suspected person. "Look here, old fellow, I have a delightful little place of my own down in the country," observed a friend the other day, "and I should like to ask you down very much to stay with me as long as you like, but—well—will you promise me on your oath you will not write about it? for, honestly, I do want to keep it to myself, and to give the slip to the tripper." Quite ten long years ago I first made the acquaintance of Cromer, and it was then the quietest and, I believe, the most romantic seaside nook in England. It had no great hotels, no piers, no bathing machines, and no bands. Sands were good enough for us then: our bathing machines were the clefts in the cliffs, our music came from wandering musicians. I walked out before dinner, and saw the sun sink Runton way a solitary pilgrim. If ever wakeful at three o'clock in the morning, I could have seen the sun rise over by the Lighthouse Cliff, standing on the turf that I suggested—entirely to myself—would be admirable for golf. The green landscape was not then starred with red-brick villas. The poppies had it all their own way. One morning, I wandered aimlessly over this soft, turfy cliff, and found myself in the most romantic of Norfolk villages. I leaned over a white gate, and looked enviously into a rose garden. I broke one of the Commandments. I envied my neighbour's house, and he, the miller of Sidestrand, repaid my ingratitude by making me his friend for life. And here I dwelt, under the shadow of the old mill, and here I discovered the Garden of Sleep, and here I became acquainted with the fishermen and the villagers, and here I have lived on and off, spring, summer, autumn, and winter, up to this very hour. For I am writing these lines in the very room, at the same table, and sitting on the same chair, as when, in that rash but generous moment, I despatched the first of the "Poppyland Papers" to the *Daily Telegraph*, and suggested there were joys to be found in summer holidays outside fashion, and dress, and promenade, and society, at the seaside.

But there are other sinners besides myself. It is not fair to make me alone bear the burden of this crime of publicity. Scarcely was the ink dry that printed "Poppyland," in the largest circulation in the world, ere George R. Sims arrived to advertise the glories of the Cromer district in his "Dagonet" column in the world-known *Referee*. Here, at the table where I write, sitting in my chair, and dipping his pen into the inkstand presented to me one Christmas by the villagers of Sidestrand, the excellent "Dagonet" exchanged sentiment for his own delightful humour. He laughed, he chaffed, and made the place notorious. He drove the predecessor of "Faust" about the Norfolk lanes, and lost his way at nightfall. But the genial Sims loves good company. He opened the stage door and lit the theatre at Poppyland. Here he brought Wilson Barrett to write plays; here he conducted poor Robert Reece to breathe some fresh air once more when he was *in extremis;* here came Henry Pettitt to collaborate with George Sims in the old mill garden. The profession, once tempted, poured into Poppyland. Beerbohm Tree dreamed of Hamlet in the Old Mill House, and actually studied the Prince of Denmark in a secluded arbour at "Northrepps." George Alexander is well known at Runton and Sherringham. Hermann Vezin loves to bathe off Overstrand beach. Ah! me, but I forget. This old table at which I write is far more famous than any of you imagine. Here, Algernon Charles Swinburne wrote "A Midsummer Holiday," whilst his friend, Theodore Watts, composed sonnets in the blue china dining-room. Plays, poems, essays, stories, leaders, descriptive papers, have all been written in this sunny little room, dear to me by many a delightful memory. And it is ten years ago since Louie opened the white gate to me, and said that the traveller might rest. Only two seconds ago the faithful Louie opened the door to just such another traveller, and assured him that there was not a bed to be had for love or money between Sherringham and Mundesley.

Companions in his crime.

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Well, what do you think! They have built a Grand Hotel, and are designing a new and splendid Pier that is to have kiosques and shops, and a theatre and dancing platform at the end. There are bands of music all over the place. There are as many donkeys and donkey-chaises at modern Cromer as at Scarborough. The primitive little Cromer of old is fringed round with scarlet

Poppyland as it is.

houses. Poets, like Mr. Sampson-Locker, and politicians, such as Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Cyril Flower, and Mr. John Morley, make Poppyland their home. The golf links that I dreamed about on the Lighthouse Cliff are an accomplished fact. The sands swarm with tents and tennis nets. Overstrand, that was once a hamlet of humble fishermen's cottages, is a red townlet of bungalows and villas. The silent lanes, trodden so few years ago alone by the husbandman, fisher, and postman, echo with the shouts of excursionists and holiday-makers. Omnibuses, *char-à-bancs*, waggonettes, donkey-chaises, go in one continual stream all day between Cromer and Trimingham. The old mill opposite my cottage has dropped its arms in horror at the change. It has tumbled down and given up the ghost. The Garden of Sleep has been so trampled upon by visitors that it has fallen half-down into the sea. From morning until night the excursionists gaze into our rose garden, lean over my white gate, and babble continuously, "Poppyland! Poppyland!" Nay, they do more—they enter laughingly, and demand relics of Dagonet, Swinburne, Pettitt, Beerbohm Tree, and Wilson Barrett. They offer bribes for Swinburne's stick and Dagonet's pipe. They have been known—enthusiastic ladies these—to ask if they might sit in the chair of the author of "Poppyland Papers," and to handle his pen. Pretty dears! So, after all, was it wholly wrong to open to the world the gates that lead to Poppyland? Someone else must decide that question. May they all be as happy there as I have been. *Deo Gratias!*

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Phillpotts refuses to recommend any place.

I do not talk about holidays with much heart, because I know that little good will come of it. People are aware that I travel about, so they repeatedly drop in and ask for guidance and advice, and beg me to tell them of "fresh fields and pastures new," of spots unhackneyed, undone by tourists, uncheapened by loathsome excursions and so forth. Then I blossom out about experiences in remote corners of the earth, and explain routes and tickets and steamboat services, and take infinite trouble for intending travellers; after which, when everything is settled, they go somewhere else. Again and again I make it clear how to get to Siberia, how to proceed through China, how to dodge Russians upon the Frontiers of India. Men sit and listen, and suck in the information, and thank me, with tears in their eyes, and then, when August comes, sneak away to Ramsgate as usual. I have

elucidated a trip to the Parry Islands (in the Arctic Ocean), and explained what perfect spots may there be found at certain times of year; and fellows, after going into figures for fitting out a whaler, and practically being upon the very verge of starting, have grown nervous and frightened, and finally edged off to Brighton or Epping Forest, or some adjacent overdone neighbourhood of that sort. Once I myself was actually going to the Holy Land with a stockbroker, and at the last moment, the man pretended to grow frightened at the magnitude of our venture, and changed his mind, and never went anywhere at all. He said the excitement of hearing about it and doing the trip on paper was quite enough holiday for him. But it is ridiculous to talk of going away from home in England. Look at the place upon a decent map of the world, and you will see that you might as reasonably start for change of air at the bottom of your back garden, or take a walking tour round a billiard table. The subject of holidays, if raised at all, must be treated in a large, untrammelled spirit. People run away with the notion that the world is a big place—doubtless because they are so small themselves. But astronomy, if nothing else, will show the errors in all finite notions of magnitude. Or take another test, involving no apparatus but your own powers of reason. Mention, in any casual gathering of men, that you propose going anywhere on the face of the globe, and I wager that one at least amidst your hearers will instantly offer you letters to people there. Concerning the next world, every man and woman, and many children also, could furnish introductions for that. As a rule, Death instantly locates an individual's new environment. Not long since I wanted to write to a publisher who had suddenly changed houses. Several others also desired to communicate with him, and we sought all over the face of the world for that man, but could not trace him anywhere. Then came the news that he was dead; and we all knew his address in a moment.

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But wishes his friends would go to the West Indies.

Few folks are aware that the West Indian Islands lie within ten days' journey of the Strand. Yet such is the case. Now, two mundane months are nothing in the lap of Time, to make no mention of Eternity; and yet, within that brief, paltry period, I left England, visited not less than fourteen insular gems, dotted like emeralds in the blue waters of the Caribbean Sea, then returned home again physically fortified and (friends say) mentally im-

proved. During those eight fleeting weeks I basked in tropic sunshine, where flying fish dot the great ocean with splashes of silver and gold; I beheld wonders of live coral and dead volcano; I accepted hospitality with free and universal heartiness from all who offered it; I noted the sugar-cane in its glory; drank the milk of green cocoanuts; plucked the luscious mango and delectable banana; partook of the pine, the bread-fruit, the custard-apple, and other trifles too numerous to mention; wandered in virgin forests; bestrode the quaint horses of that region; slew humming-birds; gazed upon the harmless parrot and weird land crab; gathered great store of fact and fancy from flora and fauna; held sweet discourse with creole and mulatto, quadroon and octoroon, Indian coolie and African negro; lived beneath awnings to the tune of tinkling ice; and by night, while the ship was tolerably silent, while no sound broke the universal peace, save nautical rats squeaking and skylarking at my feet, or the gentle flutter and rustle of winged cockroaches in my hair—then would I sit and write concerning those wonders of deep sea and tropic shore which the past day had brought to me.

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And tells them how they can do so.

The manner of performing these notable feats is simply to sail away to Barbados, and there leave the home vessel for one of the Station steamers. By keeping with the ship that takes you out, you will see Jamaica and little else; but to behold much in brief time, my plan is the best. In that case you shall visit glorious St. Vincent and Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago; or, if you prefer the Northern route, then St. Lucia, Martinique, and a dozen other beautiful islets, each with many thousand instructive sights. And, lastly, it is possible to do the mainland also, and enjoy a Revolution and a little bloodshed if you prefer pure civilisation to Nature. But bind yourself to no petty convention, about August or July being the right time for summer holidays. These are the only months during which our own dear country is in the least habitable. To leave it, therefore, just then, is madness. Rather do as I do: take your summer holiday in the winter. Instead of sitting down and whining for sunshine and pure air, go and get it. Hereditary greatness is the only thing in the world that people consider of value, which does not need an effort to come at. And even you lords and princes who read may be certain that your ancestral superiors worked pretty hard to get your present title into the family. Sunshine also is worth

having, but requires an effort to attain if you live in this country. So visit Sugar-cane Land next winter, and let me know how you got on. What? Yes, that's right: begin about time being an object, and talk of expenses and business ties and families. Then say how curiously unpractical some people are, and how fatuously idiotic it is for mere literary loafers to presume to talk to serious, busy people of an important thing like a holiday. I know you had settled all about your summer jaunt long before you read this page. I knew it before I began. Of course you had. You will trot off to Devon, or the Lakes, or Norfolk, or Wales, just as usual; and quite right too. I wish I was coming. Go just where you like, and do just what you like. May you have good luck and fine weather, and a little real rest from all the worries of this worrying world. Only choose the right friends. I would rather spend a month upon the Underground Railway with a congenial spirit than make the Grand Tour in the company of one who did not fit my nature.

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Barr sings the praises of Montreal.

It is rather a curious thing, when you come to think of it, that there is but one perfect city in the world. Of course, everybody will understand at once that I refer to Montreal. For either a summer or winter visit it offers more attractions than any other place on earth. The noblest river in America flows past its doors with water as clear as crystal, but for fear the Londoner should miss the muddy Thames and be homesick, Montreal has arranged at immense expense that the turbulent and dusky Ottawa should, at this point, empty into the transparent St. Lawrence. To make the Englishman feel perfectly at home, Montreal is so thoughtful as to be an island. Few cities would go to all this trouble merely to please people who are so inconsiderate as to reside three thousand miles away. Montreal also possesses a mountain, the view from which far excels that from the Rigi. The largest railway (and best managed) in the world terminates at Montreal, the longest bridge in all creation crosses the river at that point, the biggest hotel in Canada is there, as well as one of the grandest cathedrals in the new world —with a lift, too. Few of the most noted cathedrals in Europe are blessed with a real lift, however elevating their influence may be; in fact, Montreal is a big city that goes in for big things, and her men are not the least in any respect. The Montreal man is a good all-round specimen of humanity, an athlete, temperate, resolute and hardy, a boon companion and a staunch friend:

an Englishman—with modern improvements. Snow-shoeing, tobogganning, skating, curling, bob-sledging, ice-palacing, and such things, make Montreal a delight in the winter; all the joys pertaining to water, mountains, and forest, make it a paradise in summer. Tickets for Montreal may be had at all reliable agencies. Don't take a return; you will want to stay there.

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The discovery of Montreal.

Montreal should have been founded by an Englishman, but it was not. A Frenchman was the inventor of Montreal, and did the rough work of getting the place fairly going; then the English—as is their habit—calmly took the town and adjacent country as soon as they wanted it. This saves ever so much trouble and hard struggling. Being interested in Montreal, I took pains to find out about its origin the other day when I was in St. Malo. It was a St. Malo man who turned the first sod in Montreal; Jacques Cartier was his name, and although the oldest inhabitant of St. Malo isn't very sure about it, he thinks Jacques is dead. He told me that Jacques, even as a boy, wanted to discover Montreal. He would willingly stay away from school and go fishing, so that he might think about founding the City by the Mountain. In vain the schoolmaster argued the matter with a rod that was not for fishing purposes, and referred young Jacques to a map of the world, proving that there was no such place as Montreal, but the schoolmaster could not drive the idea out of his head, no matter what part of the body he applied the rod to. St. Malo is on an island, a very small island, with a wall around it. This has always restricted the growth of St. Malo, except in an upward direction. Cartier saw the disadvantage of this, and became more and more resolved to found a city on a larger island, with no wall around it. When Cartier grew so big that the schoolmaster could no longer whip him, he got a fleet together and sailed away to the West. Sure enough he found Montreal just where he always said it was, and the aged schoolmaster had to buy a new and corrected map. In Montreal there is a square named after Jacques Cartier, which is a fitting monument, for he was a square man who knew he was right, and then went ahead.

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Alden explains how Switzerland might be made attractive.

After a study of the subject extending through many years, I am of the opinion that Switzerland would be quite an endurable place were it not for the mountains and the Swiss. The mountains—like the sea at seaside resorts — are the chief objection to

Switzerland. If you stay in the valleys, at the foot of the mountains, you suffocate with heat, and if you stop half way up a mountain you perish with dampness. Four days out of five you are in a thick fog, and the fifth day it rains. Then the mountains make it impossible for you to walk, unless you are willing to discover and wear out hitherto unknown and very tender muscles by constantly going up or down hill. As for the theory that such is the invigorating air of Switzerland that cripples, born without legs, become able to walk thirty miles a day after spending a week among the mountains, it simply isn't true. A man can walk twice as far on a decent city sidewalk as he can over the infamous Swiss roads. The mountains may be beautiful, though why a pile of rock and snow becomes beautiful simply because it is big, I do not exactly know. Whether they are beautiful or not, you certainly find them exasperating after you have been required for the five hundredth time to dazzle your eyesight and strain your neck by staring at the Jungfrau or the Mont Blanc. What Switzerland needs is to have its mountains carefully levelled, the resulting surface laid out with smooth asphalt walks, and carefully scrubbed free from the slightest trace of its merry Swiss boys and depressing Swiss girls. At night, it might be brilliantly lighted by Neronian torches, formed of Swiss hotel-keepers, saturated with petroleum. To avoid all unnecessary cruelty, the hotel-keepers might be humanely poisoned with their own wines before being used for illuminating purposes, except, of course, such as had been guilty of aiding and abetting the odious crime of jödelling.

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The Swiss hotel-keeper—his artfulness.

Latterly, people have been comforting themselves with the belief that the Swiss hotel-keeper must very nearly have exhausted the possibilities of invention, so far as "extras" are concerned, and that henceforth it would be possible for the tourist to know in advance, within a few francs, the total amount which a Swiss hotel-keeper could add to his bill. But, as I discovered last summer, the hotel-keepers have now hit upon the happy thought of fining tourists who do not in all things meet the hotel-keeping views, and the prospect is that the fines will be even more costly than the "extras." For example, the hotel-keeper agrees to receive you for nine francs per day, exclusive of lights and wine, but inclusive of everything else. You find the wine dear and abominable, and do not drink it; and you go to bed at dark; there being

absolutely nothing else to do, and having a night-lamp of your own do not burn the hotel-keeper's candles. When your bill comes in you find that you are charged a franc a day for the wine which you have refused to drink, and another franc for the candles which you have not burned, and on remonstrating are told that such is the rule of the hotel. You must either drink bad Bordeaux at three francs the bottle, or be fined seven francs a week; and you must burn two candles every night for two francs, or be fined another seven francs per week. There is hardly any limit to be placed to the extent to which this system of punishing tourists with fines may be carried. By next year I expect to find that English tourists in Switzerland, not attending English church service, will be fined, say, five francs per Sunday, and that the fine for not hiring a daily "trap" from the hotel-keeper's stables will be fixed at three francs per day. The "certain man" who went down to Jericho and fell among Swiss was much more fortunate than the modern tourist in Switzerland, for the latter has no good Samaritan to pay his fare home when the hotel-keeper has fined him the whole amount of his letter of credit.

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The Swiss tourist—his simplicity.

Last summer, a distinguished statistician arrived at the conclusion that there is daily offered for sale, from the fifteenth of June to the fifteenth of September, to tourists in Switzerland, seventy-seven and three-eighths tons of edelweiss. If it be true that this wretched vegetable grows only near the tops of the highest mountains, and on beds of perpetual ice, how is it possible that seventy-seven and three-eighths tons of it are daily collected and sold during the season? Of course, everybody who knows the Swiss, knows that this story of the origin of edelweiss is a pure myth. It is grown in the backyards of every châlet in the land. The annual crop is nearly as large as the hay crop, and during the winter the Swiss cattle are fed almost exclusively on edelweiss. The only animals that will not eat it are the donkeys, who apparently think that it lacks the crispness of the thistle, and the jödellers, who pretend that it injures the voice. The sales of edelweiss are so large that, before many years, all the Swiss meadows that are now devoted to hay will be given over to edelweiss, and wisps of hay will be sold at every railway and post station in the country, with the legend that hay grows only at the height of 15,000 feet. Then the sentimental tourist will buy Swiss hay, and insist that it is more beautiful than all civilised flowers, and will call his next

book of weak verse "Wisps of Hay," instead of "A Wreath of Edelweiss," and the Swiss peasant will grow richer than ever, and his contempt for the tourist's intellect will be simply boundless.

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Frank Mathew's lofty ideal.

After all, what does it matter where you go for holidays, so long as you get quietness, idleness, and sunshine? Idleness is more pleasant in cities because there is so much to do, but then it is hard to get quietness in them; even in Venice you can only make sure of it by going out midway to the Lido, and tying your gondola to one of those black stumps that stud the Lagoon; there you get a breeze from the Adriatic, and—while the gondolier snores behind you—can forget the sweltering canals and the noisy streets, and see Venice at its best—in the distance. It is true that in Venice, as in most cities of Italy, you can find deserted cloisters enclosing old tangled gardens, where you can enjoy the comfort of the monks without their uncomfortable vows, and their peace without their piety. And there are sleepy places—like Laval in Brittany or Bellinzona in Ticino—where the welcome is still warm, and the servants are still servile. But nowadays, just when you are priding yourself on having discovered some unknown village, the odds are you find that your neighbour at dinner hails from Belfast or Buffalo, and many of the cloisters are now made mournful by the sad sight of young artists vainly struggling to draw. To my mind the ideal holiday haunt is the top of some mountain, not one of those ambitious heights where English people go in search of cold weather, but one more moderate, like the Bürgenstock over against the Rigi. Few English go to the Hotel Bürgenstock—they dread the plain living and high thinking—so you can count on quietness, and can lounge all day long in the pine woods, with a book open to keep your conscience silent, and look down on the Lake of the Four Cantons a long way under you, while you climb the highest neighbouring mountains in fancy, and plan the books you are never going to write. Monte Generoso is even better for laziness, since the hotel stands some way from the top, so the view is not compulsory. And as you lie on your back under a big pine, watching a glimpse of Italian sunlight through the pyramid of branches, it is delightful to know that at the expense of a little energy—which you have no idea of spending—you can win one of the noblest views in the world—white innumerable peaks along all the northern horizon, the shining lakes (Lugano, Maggiore and Como) closer, and to the south, Milan and the wide Lombard Plain.

Burgin prescribes sea and Scotland.

Or why not try Scotland? Take the steamer to Dundee. Don't stop in Dundee unless you are ill. To the ordinary Sassenach, there is a "dour" look about the town which is very depressing, in spite of its picturesque approach. But on the other side of the Tay is Tayport, a beautiful little place of about 3,000 bodies (I won't say souls, because most of the people look too dejected to have any). If you are a bad sailor, you will experience a variety of sensations before you get to Tayport, but if you are superior to *mal-de-mer* the voyage is delightful. The salt breath of the sea comes up to you at Gravesend; wheeling gulls dip and waver around you in search of contributions, voluntary or otherwise; and you feel in your nostrils the breath of life —that life which somehow eludes us in a crowded city. And then, after the thirty hours' voyage, there is all the pleasurable excitement of crossing the new Tay Bridge. Your fellow-passengers unbend for a moment, in order to point out to you just where the old bridge gave way. They like to lean back and watch the greenish hue of fear spreading over your features, quite forgetting that if the bridge did break up they also would be buried in the soft brown sands beneath.

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Where one can play golf.

You can take a cottage at Tayport for a fabulously small sum. The town is on the side of the hill. Beyond it are vast stretches of moor, purple with heather. When the tide is out you shall walk for miles along the sea-shore to St. Andrew's, or throw yourself down upon a bed of pinks, and watch the antics of the gulls and "hoodie craws" (*anglice*—carrion crows) as they fight over food cast up by the sea. A little inland are vast sand dunes only kept together by a kind of grass which has enormous roots. These dunes, like Juliet's orchard walls, "are high and hard to climb," and would tax the patience of Whymper himself. I didn't climb them often, because my host was an enthusiastic golfer, whose malady commenced at six a.m., particularly if it chanced to be what his factotum euphemistically termed a "saft morning." If it thundered and hailed, and drowned the dog out of his kennel, it was still a "saft morning." At first, I wondered at his passion for "marbles with a stick," as someone calls the noble game of golf. I watched his preparations with a fearful joy, and suggested that we had better return to breakfast. But he placed a club in my hand, gathered together a little heap of sand, put a small hard white ball

on the top, and told me to smite it. I smote. The club broke, the ball disappeared, most of my teeth seemed to drop out, and I wanted sympathy. We followed that ball around for hours. No one told me that the game counted by strokes, or I should have been a little more careful. Still, 127 for a first game was not so bad. My host himself said it might have been worse. He also added that a left-handed man generally preferred to play with a left-handed club, but perhaps I had overlooked this small detail in my anxiety to be up early. In the afternoon, we drove over to St. Andrew's to get proper clubs, and to see Andrew Lang (after whom the town is called) play golf. The papers said that he wasn't there at all, but the people on the Links knew better. Whenever a tall, thin, melancholy-looking man with brindled hair came along, they nudged one another and said in an awe-struck whisper, "That's Andrew Lang." I know he must have been there, for I saw four of him myself—all exactly alike.

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Hatton talks of the Peak District and its literary associations.

Talking of holidays, do you remember your first excursion beyond the region of your home? I should rather ask, will you ever forget it? In the little town where you lived as a boy, had you far-off hills that shut you in? And did you long to wander right away to the other side of them and see the great world beyond? Perhaps you were born in London? In that case, your longing would not be for cities, but for hills and dales and meadowlands, for the river and the sea. My desire was for the mountains and the great cities. London was a sort of myth, a Bagdad, but I had seen boys who knew Chatsworth and Bakewell and the High Torr; and one day I went over the great white road and saw the palace and the river, and stood upon the Heights of Abraham. And going homewards, Haddon cast its shadow on the way, and at Bakewell I climbed the abutments of the bridge, and watched the trout sailing along the pebbly shallows. Years after the music of the river had followed me far away in many wanderings, I learnt that the ground I had trod in my boyish rambles was sacred to others than the monks of old and their contemporary knights. I had walked in the footsteps of "Peveril of the Peak," rested in the taverns of Walton and Cotton, traversed the "Valley of Rasselas," and breathed the air which had carried the first music of "Those Evening Bells." There is a certain fascination in walking in the footsteps of genius, and contemplating the scenes which poets and romancists have immortalised. A holiday in

Derbyshire has many personal attractions to commend it. The Derbyshire Dales are worth a visit for themselves alone. Beyond their natural beauties, however, they have human ties that link them with the tenderest and sweetest instincts of the imagination. By all means, if you love Nature for herself, and find a national pride in the literary and poetic genius of your country, go to Derbyshire for a holiday. Moreover, the literary interest of the district has been brought up-to-date in "The History of David Grieve." In these days, that is a great matter. If some adventurous publisher had paid a fabulous amount of money for a certain novel called "Three Recruits," much might have been said of Miller's Dale and its "Angler's Rest"; but "David Grieve" is, they say, a ten thousand pound novel, and it therefore gives to the locality of Kinder Scout and the High Peak a new and current glamour. And I reckon "T'owd Smithy" (that was the enchanted ground of David's childhood) will continue to be a picturesque landmark in the great world of imaginative literature.

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The mind's eye versus the body's eye.

Tom Moore lived in his lonely cottage on the banks of the Dove near Ashbourne for nearly five years. He set the music of the local bells to immortal verse, and established an everlasting rebuke to the egoism of the globe-trotter, and the criticism that only finds reality in descriptions of a country which the author has seen, and characters with which he is personally acquainted. The pretended worship of so-called realism is calculated to exalt honest dullness, not to say stupidity, at the expense of the greater honesty of imagination. The truth of the highest efforts of fiction is truer for all purposes of life and letters than the truth of the novel that has only the exactness of dates and time and place to recommend it. The globe-trotter has of late become a factor in criticism. He is hypercritical in regard to fiction that deals, however incidentally, with countries with which the author is not intimately acquainted. Yet there are many travellers who know little or nothing of the countries they have seen, just as there are linguists who have no acquaintance with the literature of the languages in which they can chatter infinite nothing. The author of "John Inglesant," who had never been to Italy, showed a far more profound knowledge of the country than many critical Englishmen who knew all its routes of travel, and had assisted in half-a-dozen carnivals at Rome. There are travelled critics who contend that an author should never write about a country which he does not

know. Upon this hypothesis, what had Scott and Lytton to do with the centuries in which they did not live; and Tennyson with the Arthurian romances? Where would be the historical painter if he must only portray what he has seen? I would back the imaginative writer, who has taken trouble to post himself upon the salient points of history, climate, customs, manners, and habits of a district, however foreign to him, to realise for the reader its atmosphere and character far more successfully than the unsentimental globe-trotter who prides himself on the accuracy of his topography, and the truth of his local colour. Take "Lallah Rookh" for example. Anglo-Indians who had spent years of their lives in Lahore and Orissa were perplexed beyond description at the vivid and truthful descriptions of Eastern costume and scenery which had been written in Derbyshire by an author who had never seen the countries he was depicting. Col. Wilks, the historian of British India, could hardly be persuaded that, at least, Moore had not crossed the Oxus to catch the real truth of colour and character of his descriptions of the Vale of Cashmere. Moore was congratulated upon his work by experts in Eastern scenery and manners. The Persian Ambassador himself was among those who felicitated him upon the beauty and accuracy of his work. Persian poets of the day went so far in their unintentional compliments as to suggest that the best of his songs must have been taken originally from some Persian poet; but they could never discover that other Persian poet. How Moore achieved all this is fully set forth in his diary. Not that there was anything new in his method of inquiry, investigation, and study. To-day this kind of work is apt to be overlooked or discounted by what is called up-to-date literature, which gives us the modern society novel of contemporary manners, and none the less clever, if only "topical," comedy of a Frenchified life and love in London.

* * * *

Alden discovers why some folks go to Paris.

I think I have discovered why Englishmen and Americans go to Paris. To the Englishman, Paris is a place where he can appear on the street and at the theatres wearing a travelling cap made of black and white checked cloth. Owing to a popular belief that there is a statute forbidding the wearing of this article in England, and being visited from time to time with a wild passion for displaying himself thus arrayed, the Englishman rushes to Paris, where he parades the Boulevards, and pervades the various places of amusement, with his checked cap drawn firmly over his

forehead, and his mind made up not to part with it unless he first parts with his head. Far different is the purpose which takes the American to Paris. He is the victim of a passion for "registering" himself, or, in other words, for writing his name in books set apart for that purpose by persons who basely pander to his weakness. There are half-a-dozen places in Paris where the American can "register," and he makes it a rule to "register" at one or another of them at least once a day. As you meet him in the street you notice either that he has a preoccupied and hurried air, which means that he is on his way to "register," or else that his face beams with self-satisfaction, in which case you know that he has just complied with the invitation of some clerk, or banker, or tourist agent, to "step right up and register." Of course there are both Englishmen and Americans who have other and holier motives for coming to Paris, but from long study I am convinced that the average Englishman thinks of Paris only as a place in which to wear a travelling cap, and the average American visits Paris solely in order to gratify his degrading passion for "registering."

With kindest regards
Hall Caine

THE IDLER.

My First Book.

V.—THE SHADOW OF A CRIME.

By Hall Caine.

Illustrations by G. Hutchinson, A. S. Boyd, and A. H. Fisher.
Photographs by A. M. Pettit.

I CANNOT follow Mr. Besant with any pitiful story of rejection at the hands of publishers. If refusal is quite the best thing that can happen to the candidate for literary honours, my fate has not been favourable. No tale of mine has yet passed from publishing house to publishing house. Except the first of the series, my stories have been accepted before they have been read. In two or three

MR. HALL CAINE'S HOUSE AT KESWICK.

instances they have been bought before they have been written. It has occurred to me, as to others, to have two or three publishers offering terms for the same book. I have even been offered half payment in hand on account of a book which I could not hope to write for years, and might never write at all. Thus the most help-

ful confession which the more or less successful man of letters can make for the comfort and cheer of his younger and less fortunate brethren, it is out of my power to offer.

But I reflect that this is true of my literary experiences in the character of a novelist only. I had an earlier and semi-subterranean career that was very different. At eighteen I wrote a poem of a mystical sort, which was printed (not at my own risk) and published under a pseudonym. Happily, no man will ever identify me behind the romantic name wherein I hid my own. Only one literary man knew my secret. That was George Gilfillan, and he is dead. Then at twenty I wrote an autobiography for another person, and was paid ten pounds for it. These were really my first books, and I grow quite hot when I think of them. At five and twenty I came up to London with the manuscript of a critical work, which I had written while at Liverpool. Somebody had recommended that I should submit it to a certain great publishing house, and I took it in person. At the door of the office I was told to write my own name, and the name of the person whom I wished to see, and to state the nature of my business. I did so, and the boy who took my message brought back word that I might leave my manuscript for consideration. It seemed to me that somebody might have seen me for a minute, but I had expected too much. The manuscript was carefully tied up in brown paper, and so I left it.

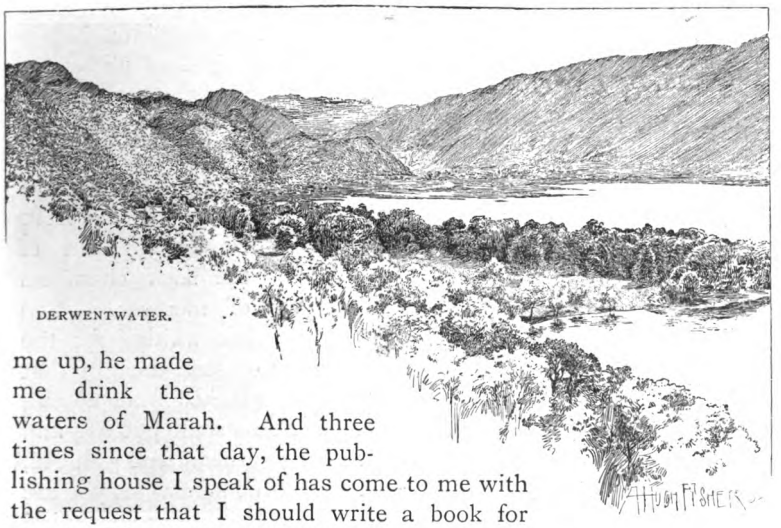
"I LEFT IT.

After waiting three torturing weeks for the decision of the publishers, I made bold to call again. At the same little box at the door of the office I had once more to fill up the same little document. The boy took it in, and I was left to sit on his table, to look at the desk which he had been whittling away with his penknife, to wait and to tremble. After a time I heard a footstep returning. I thought it might be the publisher or the editor of the house. It was the boy back again. He had a pile of loose sheets of white paper in his hands. They were the sheets of my book. "The Editor's compliments, sir, and—thank you," said the boy, and my manuscript went sprawling over the table. I gathered it up, tucked it as deep as possible into the darkness, under the wings of my Inverness cape, and went downstairs

ashamed, humiliated, crushed, and broken-spirited. Not quite that, either, for I remember that, as I got to the fresh air at the door, my gorge rose within me, and I cried in my heart, "By God, you shall ——" and something proud and vain.

"MY MS. WENT SPRAWLING OVER THE TABLE."

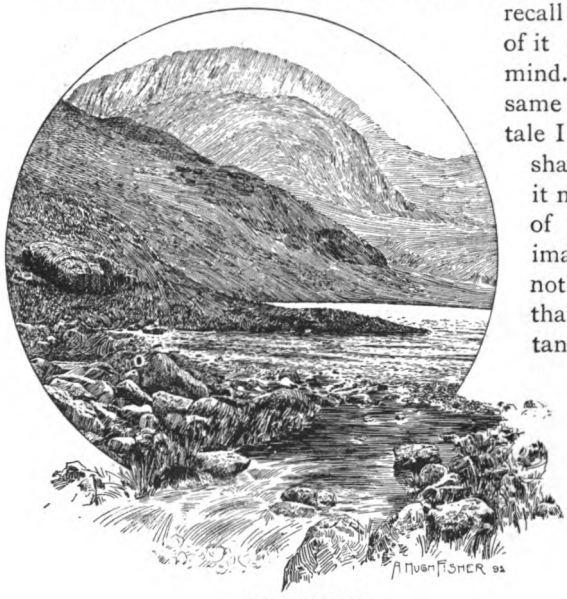
I dare say it was all right and proper and in good order. The book was afterwards published, and I think it sold well. I hardly know whether I ought to say that the Editor should have shown me more courtesy. It was all a part of the anarchy of things which Mr. Hardy considers the rule of life. But the sequel is worth telling. That Editor became my personal friend. He is dead, and he was a good and able man. Of course he remembered nothing of this incident, and I never poisoned one hour of our intercourse by telling him how, when I was young and a word of cheer would have buoyed me up, he made me drink the waters of Marah. And three times since that day, the publishing house I speak of has come to me with the request that I should write a book for them. I have never been able to do so, but I have outgrown my bitterness, and, of course, I show no malice. Indeed, I have now the best reasons for wishing the great enterprise well. But if literary confessions are worth anything, this one may perhaps be a seed that will somewhere find grateful soil.



DERWENTWATER.

Keep a good heart, even if you have to knock in vain at many doors, and kick about the backstairs of the house of letters. There is room enough inside.

I wrote and edited sundry things during my first years in London, but not until I had published a story did I feel that I had so much as touched the consciousness of the public. Hence, my first novel may very properly be regarded as my first book, and if I have no tale to tell of heart-broken impediments in getting it published, I have something to say of the difficulty of getting it written. The novel is called "The Shadow of a Crime," but title it had none until it was finished, and a friend christened it. I cannot remember when the story was begun, because I cannot recall a time when the idea of it did not exist in my mind. Something of the same kind is true of every tale I have ever written or shall ever write. I think it must be in the nature of imagination that an imaginative idea does not spring into being, that it has no spontaneous generation, but, as a germinating conception, a shadow of a vision, always comes floating from somewhere out of the back chambers of memory. You are waiting for the central thought that shall link together incidents that you have gleaned from among the stubble of many fields, for the *motif* that shall put life and meaning into the characters that you have gathered and grouped, and one morning, as you awake, just at that moment when you are between the land of light and the mists of sleep, and as your mind is grappling back for the vanishing form of some delicious dream, a dim but familiar ghost of an idea comes up unbidden for the hundredth time, and you say to yourself, with surprise at your own stupidity, "That's it!"



STY HEAD PASS.

The idea of my first novel moved about me in this way for many years before I recognised it. As usually happens, it came in the shape of a story. I think it was, in actual fact, first of all, a tale of a grandfather. My mother's father was a Cumberland man, and he was full of the lore of the hills and dales. One of the oldest legends of the Lake mountains tells of the time of the plague. The people were afraid to go to market, afraid to meet at church, and afraid to pass on the highway. When any lonely body was ill, the nearest neighbour left meat and drink at the door of the afflicted house, and knocked and ran away. In these

WASTWATER FROM STY HEAD PASS.

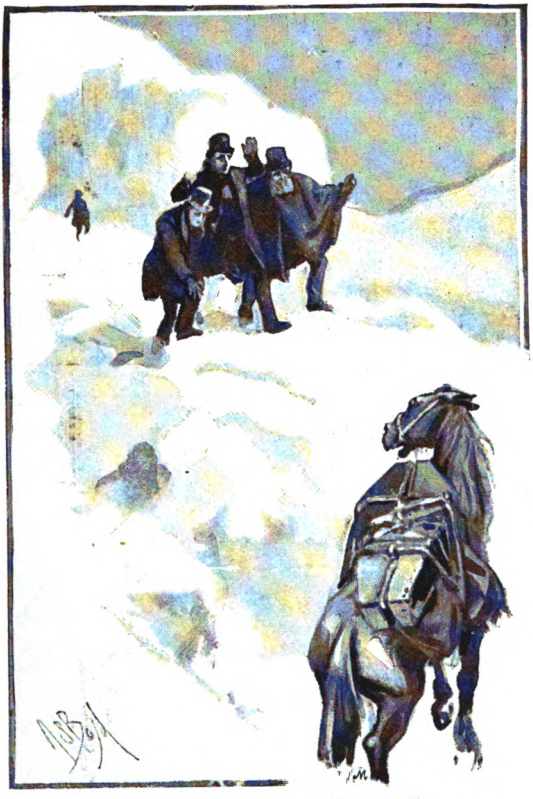
days, a widow with two sons lived in one of the darkest of the valleys. The younger son died, and the body had to be carried over the mountains to be buried. Its course lay across Sty Head Pass, a bleak and "brant" place, where the winds are often high. The eldest son, a strong-hearted lad, undertook the duty. He strapped the coffin on to the back of a young horse, and they started away. The day was wild, and on the top of the pass, where the path dips into Wastdale, between the breast of Great Gable and the heights of Scawfell, the wind rose to a gale. The horse was terrified. It broke away and galloped over the fells, carrying its burden with it. The lad followed and searched for it, but in vain, and he had to go home at last, unsatisfied.

This was in the spring, and nearly all the summer through, the surviving son of the widow was out on the mountains, trying to recover the runaway horse, but never once did he catch sight of it, though sometimes, as he turned homeward at night, he thought he heard, in the gathering darkness, above the sough of the wind, the horse's neigh. Then winter came, and the mother died. Once more the dead body had to be carried over the fells for burial, and once again the coffin was strapped on the back of a horse. It was an old mare that was chosen this time, the mother of the young one that had been lost. The snow lay deep on the pass, and from the cliffs of the Scawfell pikes it hung in great toppling masses. All went well with the little funeral party until they came to the top of the pass, and though the day was dead calm the son held the rein with a hand that was like a vice. But just as the mare reached the spot where the wind had frightened the young horse, there was a terrific noise. An immense body of the snow had parted at that instant from the beetling heights overhead, and rushed down into the valley with the movement as of a mighty earthquake, and the deafening sound as of a peal of thunder. The dale echoed and re-echoed from side to side, and from height to height. The old mare was affrighted; she reared, leapt, flung her master away, and galloped off. When they had recovered from their consternation, the funeral party gave chase, and at length, down in a hollow place, they thought they saw what they were in search

"THE HORSE BROKE AWAY."

of. It was a horse with something strapped on its back. When they came up with it they found it was the *young* horse, with the coffin of the younger son. They led it away, and buried the body that it had carried so long, but the old mare they never recovered, and the body of the mother never found sepulchre.

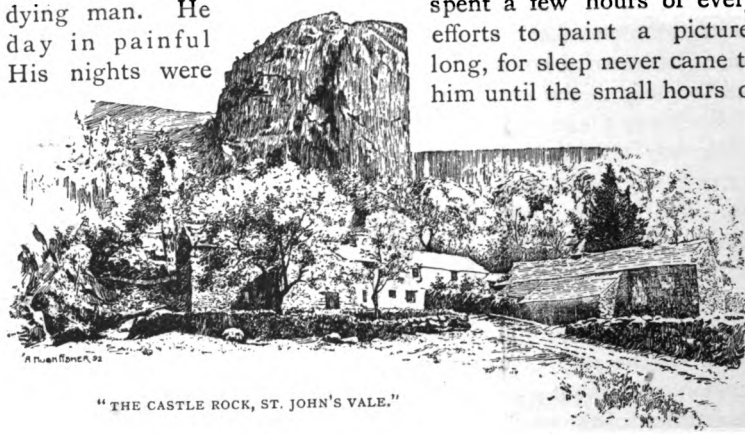
Such was the legend, sufficiently terrible, and even ghastly, which was the germ of my first novel. Its fascination for me lay in its shadow and suggestion of the supernatural. I thought it had all the grip of a ghost story without ever passing out of the world of reality. Imagination played about the position of that elder son, and ingenuity puzzled itself for the sequel to his story. What did he think? What did he feel? What were his superstitions? What became of him? Did he die mad, or was he a MAN, and did he rise out of all doubt and terror. I cannot say how many years this ghost of a conception (with various brothers and sisters of a similar complexion) haunted my mind before I recognised it as the central incident of a story, the fagot for a fire from which other incidents might radiate and imaginary characters take life. When I began to think of it in this practical way I was about six-and-twenty, and was lodging in a lonely farmhouse in the Vale of St. John.



"SOMETHING STRAPPED ON ITS BACK."

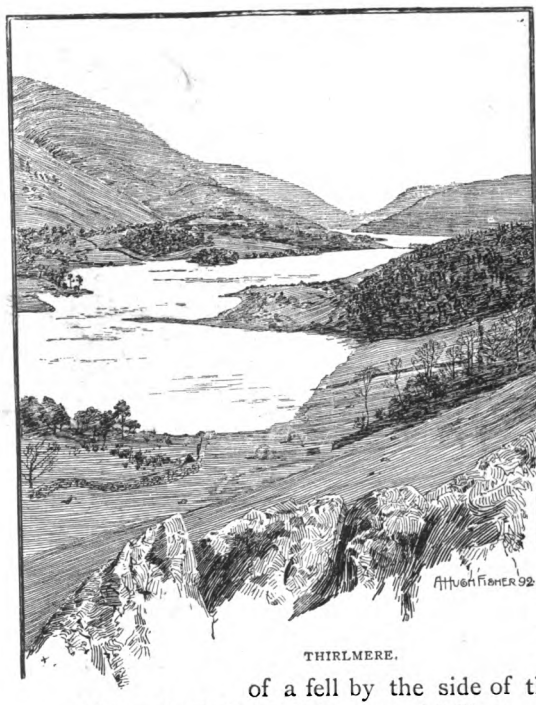
Rossetti was with me, for I had been up to London at his request, and had brought him down to my retreat. The story of that sojourn among the mountains I have told elsewhere. It lives in

my memory as a very sweet and sad experience. The poet was a dying man. He spent a few hours of every day in painful efforts to paint a picture. His nights were long, for sleep never came to him until the small hours of



"THE CASTLE ROCK, ST. JOHN'S VALE."

the morning; his sight was troublesome, and he could not read with ease; he was in that condition of ill-health when he could not bear to be alone, and thus he and I were much together. I was just then looking vaguely to the career of a public lecturer, and was delivering a long course of lectures at Liverpool. The subject was prose fiction, and to fortify myself for the work I was reading the masterpieces over again. Seeing this, Rossetti suggested that I should read aloud, and I did so. Many an evening we passed in this way. The farm-house stood at the foot of a fell by the side of the lowest pool of a ghyll, Fishers' Ghyll, and the roar of falling waters could be heard from



THIRLMERE.

within. On the farther side of the vale there were black crags where ravens lived, and in the unseen bed of the dale between lay the dark waters of Thirlmere. The surroundings were striking to the eye and ear in the daylight, but when night came, and the lamp was lit, and the curtains were drawn, and darkness covered everything outside, they were yet more impressive to the imagination. I remember those evenings with gratitude and some pain. The little oblong room, the dull thud of the ghyll like faint thunder overhead, the crackle of the wood fire, myself reading aloud, and Rossetti in a long sack painting coat, his hands thrust into its upright pockets, walking with his heavy and uncertain step to and fro, to and fro, laughing sometimes his big deep laugh, and sometimes sitting down to wipe his moist spectacles and clear his dim eyes. The autumn was far spent, and the nights were long. Not rarely the dead white gleams of the early dawn before the coming of the sun met the yellow light of our candles as we passed on the staircase going to bed a little window that looked up to the mountains, and over them to the east.

"ROSSETTI WALKING TO AND FRO.

Perhaps it was not all pleasure, so far as I was concerned, but certainly it was all profit. The novels we read were "Tom Jones,"

in four volumes, and "Clarissa," in its original eight, one or two of Smollett's, and some of Scott's. Rossetti had not, I think, been a great reader of fiction, but his critical judgment was in some respects the surest and soundest I have known. He was one of the only two men I have ever met with who have given me in personal intercourse a sense of the presence of a gift that is above and apart from talent—in a word, of genius. Nothing escaped him. His alert mind seized upon everything. He had never before, I think, given any thought to fiction as an art, but his intellect played over it like a bright light. It amazes me now, after ten years' close study of the methods of story-telling, to recall the general principles which he seemed to formulate out of the back of his head for the defence of his swift verdicts. "Now why?" I would say, when the art of the novelist seemed to me to fail, or when the poet's condemnation appeared extreme. "Because so-and-so *must* happen," he would answer. He was always right. He grasped with masterly strength the operation of the two fundamental factors in the novelist's art—the sympathy and the "tragic mischief." If these were not working well, he knew by the end of the first chapters that, however fine in observation, or racy in humour, or true in pathos, the work as an organism must fail.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

It was an education in literary art to sharpen one's wits on such a grindstone, to clarify one's thought in such a stream, to strengthen one's imagination by contact with a mind that was "of imagination all compact."

Now, down to that time, though I had often aspired to the writing of plays, it had never occurred to me that I might write a novel. But I began to think of it then as a remote possibility, and the immediate surroundings of our daily life brought back recollection of the old Cumberland legend. I told the story to Rossetti, and he was impressed by it, but he strongly advised me not to tackle it. The incident did not repel him by its ghastliness, but he saw no way of getting sympathy into it on any side. His judgment disheartened me, and I let the idea go back to the dark chambers of memory. He urged me to try my hand at a Manx

story. "'The Bard of Manxland'—it's worth while to be that," he said—he did not know the author of "Foc's'tle Yarns." I thought so, too, but the Cumbrian "statesman" had begun to lay hold of my imagination. I had been reviving my recollection and sharpening my practice of the Cumbrian dialect which had been familiar to my ear, and even to my tongue, in childhood, and so my Manx ambitions had to wait.

Two years passed, the poet died, I had spent eighteen months in daily journalism in London, and was then settled in a little bungalow of three rooms in a garden near the beach at Sandown in the Isle of Wight. And there, at length, I began to write my first novel. I had grown impatient of critical work, had persuaded myself (no doubt wrongly) that nobody would go on writing about other people's writing who could do original writing himself, and was resolved to live on little and earn nothing, and never go back to London until I had written something of some sort. As nearly as I can remember, I had enough to keep things going for four months, and if, at the end of that time, nothing had got itself done, I must go back bankrupt.

Something did get done, but at a heavy price of labour and heart-burning. When I began to think of a theme, I found four or five subjects clamouring for acceptance. There was the story of the Prodigal Son, which afterwards became "The Deemster;" the story of Jacob and Esau, which in the same way turned into "The Bondman;" the story of Samuel and Eli, which, after a fashion, moulded itself ultimately into "The Scapegoat," and half-a-dozen other stories, chiefly Biblical, which are still on the forehead of my time to come. But the Cumbrian legend was first favourite, and to that I addressed myself. I thought I had seen a way to meet Rossetti's objection. The sympathy was to be got out of the elder son. He was to think God's hand was upon him. But whom God's hand rested on had God at his right hand; so the elder son was to be a splendid fellow—brave, strong, calm, patient, long-suffering, a victim of unrequited love, a man standing square on his legs against all weathers. It is said that the young novelist usually begins with a glorified version of his own character; but it must interest my friends to see how every quality of my first hero was a rebuke to my own peculiar infirmities.

Above this central figure and legendary incident I grouped a family of characters. They were heroic and eccentric, good and bad, but they all operated upon the hero. Then I began to write.

Shall I ever forget the agony of the first efforts? There was

the ground to clear with necessary explanations. This I did in the way of Scott in a long prefatory chapter. Having written it I read it aloud, and found it unutterably slow and dead. Twenty pages were gone, and the interest was not touched. Throwing the chapter aside I began with an alehouse scene, intending to

MR. HALL CAINE IN HIS STUDY.

work back to the history in a piece of retrospective writing. The alehouse was better, but to try its quality I read it aloud, after the "Rainbow" scene in "Silas Marner," and then cast it aside in despair. A third time I began, and when the alehouse looked

tolerable the retrospective chapter that followed it seemed flat and poor. How to begin by gripping the interest, how to tell all and yet never stop the action—these were agonising difficulties.

It took me nearly a fortnight to start that novel, sweating drops as of blood at every fresh attempt. I must have written the first half volume four times at the least. After that I saw the way clearer, and got on faster. At the end of three months I had written nearly two volumes, and then in good spirits I went up to London.

MRS. HALL CAINE.

My first visit was to J. S. Cotton, an old friend, and to him I detailed the lines of my story. His rapid mind saw a new opportunity. "You want *peine forte et dure*," he said. "What's that?" I said. "An old punishment—a beautiful thing," he answered. "Where's my dear old Blackstone?" and the statute concerning the punishment for standing mute was read to me. It was just the thing I wanted for my hero, and I was in rapture, but I was also in despair. To work this fresh interest into my theme half of what I had written would need to be destroyed!

It *was* destroyed, the interesting piece of ancient jurisprudence took a leading place in my scheme, and after two months more I got well into the third volume. Then I took my work down to Liverpool, and showed it to my friend, the late John Lovell, a most able man, first manager of the Press Association, but

then editing the local *Mercury*. After he had read it he said, "I suppose you want my *candid* opinion?" "Well, ye—s," I said. "It's crude," he said. "But it only wants sub-editing." Sub-editing!

I took it back to London, began again at the first line, and wrote every page over again. At the end of another month the story had been reconstructed, and was shorter by some fifty pages of manuscript. It had drawn my heart's blood to cut out my pet passages, but they were gone, and I knew the book was better. After that I went on to the end and finished with a tragedy. Then the story was sent back to Lovell, and I waited for his verdict.

"COMING UP IN THE TRAIN."

My home (or what served for it) was now on the fourth floor of New Court, in Lincoln's Inn, and one morning Lovell came puffing and blowing and steaming (the good fellow was a twenty-stone man) into my lofty nest. He had re-read my novel coming up in the train. "Well?" I asked, nervously. "It's magnificent," he said. That was all the favourable criticism he offered. All save one practical and tangible bit. "We'll give you £100 for the serial right of the story for the *Weekly*."

He offered one unfavourable criticism. "The death of your hero will never do," he said. "If you kill that man Ralph you'll kill your book. What's the good? Take no more than the public will give you to begin with, and by and bye they'll take what *you* give *them*." It was practical advice, but it went sorely against my grain. The death of the hero was the natural sequel to the story; the only end that gave meaning, and intention, and logic to its *motif*. I had a strong predisposition towards a tragic climax to a serious story. To close a narrative of disastrous events with a happy ending it always seemed necessary to turn every incident into accident. That was like laughing at the reader. Comedy was comedy, but comedy and tragedy together was farce. Then a solemn close was so much more impressive. A happy end nearly always frayed off into rags and nothingness, but a sad one closed and clasped a story as with a clasp. Besides, a tragic end might be a glorious and satisfying one, and need by no means

be squalid and miserable. But all these arguments went down before my friend's practical assurance: "Kill that man, and you kill your book."

With much diffidence I altered the catastrophe and made my hero happy. Then, thinking my work complete, I asked Mr. Theodore Watts (a friend to whose wise counsel I owed much in those days) to read some "galley" slips of it. He thought the rustic scenes good, but advised me to moderate the dialect, and he propounded to me his well-known views on the use of *patois* in fiction. "It gives a sense of reality," he said, "and often has the effect of wit, but it must not stand in the way." The advice was sound. A man may know over much of his subject to write on it properly. I had studied Cumbrian to too much purpose, and did not realise that some of my scenes were like sealed books to the general reader. So once again I ran over my story, taking out some of the "nobbuts," and the "dustas," and the "wiltas."

My first novel was now written, but I had still to get it published. In my early days in London, while trying to live in the outer court of a calling wherein the struggle for existence is keenest and bitterest and cruellest, I conceived one day the idea of offering myself as a reader to the publishers. With this view I called on several of that ilk, who have perhaps no recollection of my early application. I recall my interview with one of them. He was sitting at a table when I was taken into his room, and he never once raised his head from his papers to look at me. I just remember that he had a neck like a three-decker, and a voice like a peahen's. "Well, sir?" he said. I mentioned the object of my visit. "What can you read?" "Novels and poems," I answered. "Don't publish either—good day," he said, and I went out.

But one of the very best, and quite, I think, the very oldest of publishers now living, received me differently. "Come into my own room," he said. It was a lovely little place, full of an atmosphere that recalled the publishing house of the old days, half office, half study; a workshop where books might be made, not turned out by machinery. I read many manuscripts for that publisher, and must have learned much by the experience. And now that my novel was finished I took it to him first. He offered to publish it the following year. That did not suit me, and I took my book elsewhere. Next day I was offered £50 for my copyright. That was wages at the rate of about four shillings a day for the time I had been actually engaged upon the work, sweating brain and heart and every faculty. Nevertheless, one of my friends

urged me to accept it. "Why?" I asked. "Because it is a story of the past, and therefore not one publisher in ten will look at it." I used strong language, and then took my novel to Chatto and Windus. Within a few hours Mr. Chatto made me an offer which I accepted. The book is now, I think, in its twelfth edition.

Such is the story of the writing of my first novel, and if the disclosure is of any interest, let me conclude with one suggestion that may be of value, and one remark that may be timely. Nearly every writer will be found, I fear, to have parted with his early copyrights. There is something to be said in favour of selling a

A CORNER OF THE STUDY.

first book outright where the publisher is enterprising, and has faith in his author, and a disposition to push his reputation. But there is more to be said against that course as an act of policy. The pity is that it is nearly always forced on a young writer by his poverty. He must have money down, and the publisher who has no precedent to go upon in giving advances on royalties can only take the risk of purchase at a broad chance of profit. A fund of a thousand pounds, or perhaps half that much, wisely used in making advance payments on account of royalties, would save many a new man (who has out of all doubt written a book that

will last) from the horns of his dilemma. Fifty pounds in hand, with copyright retained, would often secure to him in the end an income of as much a year. My suggestion is that such a fund be started in connection with the Authors' Society, and if the idea commends itself to my brother novelists I shall be glad to offer the first fifty pounds towards it.

IN THE GARDEN.

My final remark shall be a brief one. The story I have told of many breakdowns in the attempt to write my first novel may suggest the idea that I was merely serving my apprenticeship to fiction. It is true that I was, but it would be wrong to conclude that the writing of a novel has been plain sailing with me ever since. Let me "throw a crust to my critics," and confess that I am serving my apprenticeship still. Every book that I have written since has offered yet greater difficulties. Not one of the little series but has at some moment been a despair to me. There has always been a point of the story at which I have felt confident that it must kill me. I have written six novels (that is to say, about sixteen), and sworn as many oaths that I would never begin another. Three times I have thrown up commissions in sheer terror of the work ahead of one. Yet here I am at this moment (like half-a-dozen of my fellow-craftsmen), with contracts in hand, which I cannot get through before the end of 1894. The public expects a novel to be light reading. It may revenge itself for occasional disappointments by remembering that a novel is not always light writing.

The Adventures of Walter Schnaffs.

By Guy de Maupassant.

Illustrations by R. Jack.

FROM the time he entered France in the invading German army, Walter Schnaffs considered himself the most unhappy of men. He was very fat, he walked with difficulty, and he suffered much and painfully on the march from his large, flat feet. He was of a pacific and benevolent nature, not in the least brave or sanguinary. He was the father of four children, whom he adored, and he was continually regretting the tenderness, the loving little cares, and the gentle kisses of his fair young wife. He was fond of going to bed early and getting up late, he liked eating good things slowly, and drinking quantities of beer at the *bièr-garten*. He nourished in his heart an overwhelming hatred of cannons, pistols, revolvers, and swords, and, above all, of bayonets, which weapon he felt himself incapable of manœuvring smartly enough to defend, in any adequate manner, his large person.

"ROLLED IN HIS CLOAK."

And when the night fell, and he lay, rolled in his cloak, alongside of his snoring comrades, he used to think of his family

left behind at home, and of the dangers spread about his path. If he were killed, what would become of the little ones? Who would feed and clothe and educate them? They were far from rich, in spite of the debts he had contracted before starting in order to leave them some ready money. And Walter Schnaffs used to cry sometimes as he lay awake.

"JUMPED STRAIGHT INTO IT."

At the beginning of a battle, he always felt such an awful weakness in his legs that he would have fallen down if he had not reflected that all the army would, in that case, pass over his body. The whistling of the bullets used to make his flesh creep.

For months he lived thus, in terror and in anguish. His army-corps was advancing towards Normandy; and, one day, he was sent with a small detachment which had simply to explore a part of the country and return. Everything seemed quiet around; nothing indicated the likelihood of resistance.

The Prussians were descending a little valley crossed by deep ravines, when a violent fusilade stopped them suddenly, knocking over twenty of them; and a troop of *francs-tireurs* appeared out of a tiny little wood, and charged the enemy with their bayonets.

Walter Schnaffs was struck motionless, so surprised and startled that he did not think even of flight. Then a mad desire seized him to escape; but he recollected that he would run with the slow-

ness of a tortoise in comparison to those thin Frenchmen, who bounded like a flock of goats. Then, perceiving close before him a wide ditch full of undergrowth and dry leaves, he jumped straight into it, with his feet close together, without even thinking of the depth, just as a man jumps from a bridge into a river.

He passed, after the manner of an arrow, through a thick bed of branches and sharp twigs, which scratched his face and hands, and fell heavily in a sitting posture on a bed of stones.

Raising his eyes, he saw the sky through the tunnel he had pierced. This tunnel might betray him, and he carefully dragged himself on all fours under the roof of enlaced branches as far as he could get from the scene of conflict. Then he stopped and sat down again, hidden like a hare in the dry grass and undergrowth.

He heard the sound of firing and shouting going on for some time, then the clamour grew fainter. and at last ceased, and everything was silent and still again.

The night came, and the shadows of the ravine blackened. The soldier began to think. What should he do? What would become of him? Rejoin his army? How? Where? Begin again the horrible life of agony, of terror, of fatigue, and suffering he had led since the beginning of the war? No! He felt he had no longer the courage or the enterprise to stand long marches and run into danger with every step he took!

But he could not remain hidden in the ravine till the war was over. The prospect, it is true, would not have deterred him, if food had not been necessary; but food, and food every day, was necessary.

And there he was, all alone, under arms, in uniform, in the enemy's territory, far from those who could defend him. Shudders ran up and down his spine.

Suddenly he thought, "If I were only a prisoner!" And his heart swelled with a desire, a violent, immoderate desire, to be a prisoner in the hands of the French. Prisoner! He would be saved, fed, lodged, sheltered from balls and sabres, without any possible apprehension, in a good, well-guarded prison. Prisoner! What a dream!

His resolution was taken on the spot.

"I shall go and be made prisoner!"

He rose, resolved to carry out his project without a moment's delay, and then stood motionless, suddenly assailed by annoying reflections and new fears.

Where should he go and be made prisoner? How? Frightful pictures, pictures of death, presented themselves before his imagination.

He would run terrible danger if he ventured alone in his *pickelhaube* in the country.

"THEY WOULD MASSACRE HIM."

Suppose he met some peasants? These peasants, seeing a lost Prussian, a defenceless Prussian, would kill him like a dog! They would massacre him with their pitchforks, or their scythes, or their hoes! They would annihilate him with all the fury of the exasperated vanquished!

Suppose he met some *francs-tireurs?* These *francs-tireurs*,

wild beings without law or discipline, would fusilade him just for fun, for the amusement of the moment. And he felt himself, in imagination, placed against a wall in front of a dozen rifles, with all their little round black holes pointed at him like eyes.

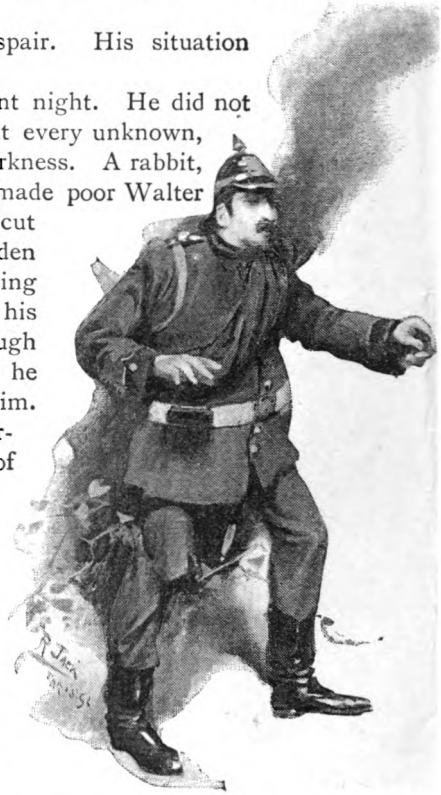
Suppose he met the French army itself? The advance guard would take him for a scout, for some bold and hardy trooper who had gone out alone to reconnoitre, and would fire on him, and in imagination he heard irregular detonations from the soldiers hidden in the bushes, while he, standing up by himself in the middle of the field, fell, riddled by the balls which he felt piercing his flesh.

He sat down again in despair. His situation appeared to be without issue.

Night had come; black, silent night. He did not move again, but sat, trembling at every unknown, faint sound that rose in the darkness. A rabbit, rustling out of its hole, almost made poor Walter Schnaffs fly. The owl's cries cut into his soul, and sent sudden fears as painful as wounds thrilling through him. He stretched his eyes wide to try and see through the shadow, and every minute he imagined he heard steps near him.

After hours that seemed interminable, and agony like that of the damned, he saw through the roof of branches that the sky was growing light. An immense sense of relief came over him; his limbs extended in sudden repose, his heart grew easy, his eyes closed · he fell asleep

When he awoke the sun seemed about the middle of the sky; it must be noon. No sound troubled the dead silence, and Walter Schnaffs perceived that he was suffering from acute hunger.



"HE ROSE AND TOOK A FEW STEPS."

He yawned; and his mouth watered at the thought of sausage —the good sausage dealt out to the soldiers.

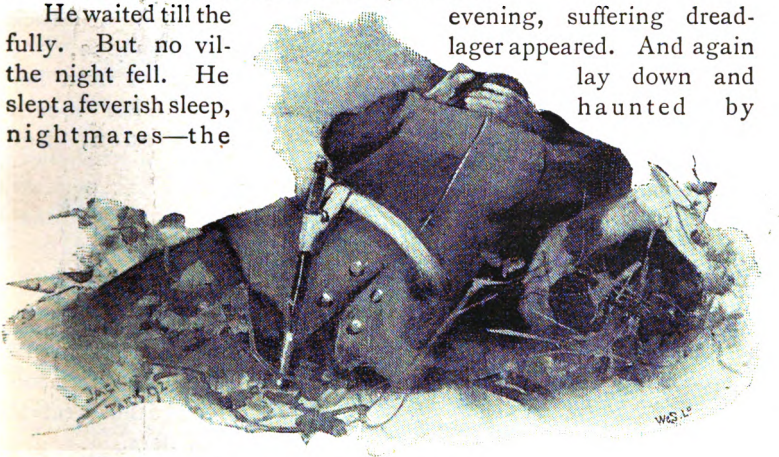
He rose and took a few steps, and then, feeling his legs weak, sat down again to reflect. For two or three hours he weighed the *pros* and *cons.*, changing his mind every few minutes.

At last, one idea appeared logical and practical; he would put himself in way of one villager, out alone, without weapons or any dangerous tools, and make him understand that he surrendered as a prisoner of war.

He took off his helmet, the spike of which might betray him, and put his head out of his hole with infinite precaution.

Not a single being was to be seen on the horizon. Below, to the right, a little village was sending up tiny spirals of smoke—smoke from its kitchens! To the left, he saw, at the end of a long avenue, a large *château*, flanked by towers.

He waited till the evening, suffering dreadfully. But no villager appeared. And again the night fell. He lay down and slept a feverish sleep, haunted by nightmares—the



"THE SLEEP OF A FAMISHED MAN."

sleep of a famished man.

The morning rose once more. He looked about him; but the country-side was empty as it had been the day before. And a new fear entered into the soul of Walter Schnaffs: the fear of dying of starvation!

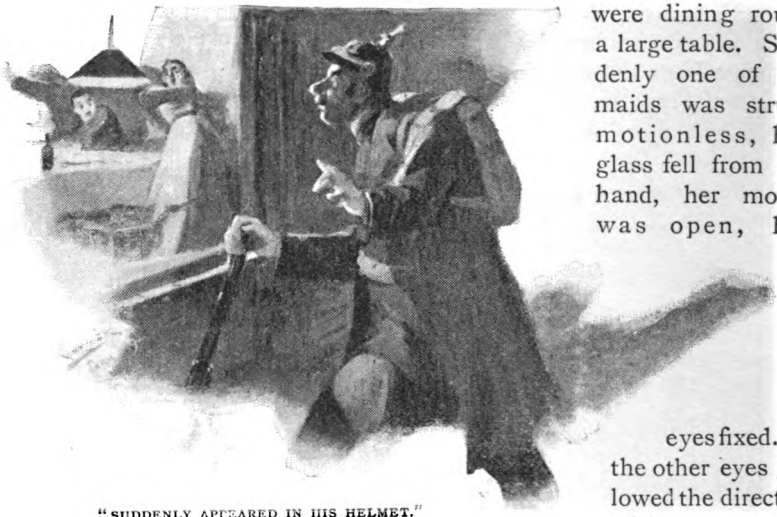
At last, driven to desperation by this fear, he resolved to dare all, and to brave all, and make his way to the village, when he saw three peasants going to the fields with their pitchforks over their shoulders, and plunged back into his hiding-place.

But as soon as the dusk of the evening fell, he clambered out of the ditch, and started for the *château*, with a heart

beating with fear. He preferred the *château* to the village, which seemed to him as terrible as a den full of tigers.

The windows on the ground floor were lighted up. One was open, and a powerful odour of roast meat escaped from it, an odour that penetrated the nose and the heart of Walter Schnaffs, that made him gasp for breath, and drew him irresistibly forward, filling his soul with desperate audacity.

And, without thinking of what he was doing, he suddenly appeared in his helmet at the frame of the open window.



"SUDDENLY APPEARED IN HIS HELMET."

Eight servants were dining round a large table. Suddenly one of the maids was struck motionless, her glass fell from her hand, her mouth was open, her eyes fixed. All the other eyes followed the direction of hers.

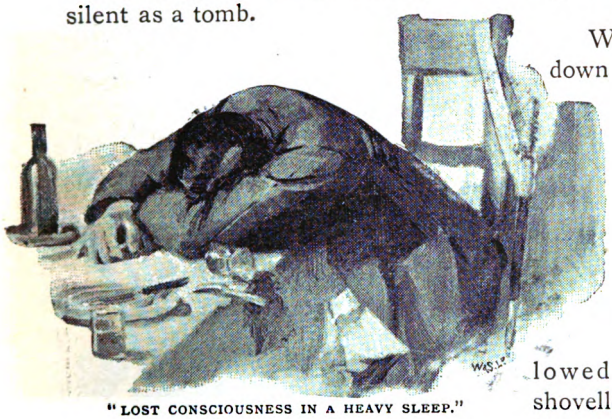
They saw the enemy!

Heavens! the Prussians were attacking the *château!*

There was one simultaneous cry, made up of eight cries in different tones, a cry of awful terror, and then a tumultuous rising, a rush, a mad flight towards the door at the end of the room. The chairs were kicked over; the men knocked down the women and jumped over them in their eagerness to get away. In two seconds the room was empty and abandoned, and its well-spread table lay before Walter Schnaffs, who still stood, stupefied, at the window.

After a few instants' hesitation, he vaulted over the window-sill, and advanced towards the table. He was trembling with hunger; but he was paralysed, too, and held back by terror. He listened—the whole house seemed to be shaking; doors were shut-

ting, and hurried steps sounded on the floor above. The Prussian lent his ear to the confused noises; he heard dull thuds outside, as if people were jumping out of the window on to the soft earth. Then every movement ceased, and the great *château* grew as silent as a tomb.



"LOST CONSCIOUSNESS IN A HEAVY SLEEP."

Walter Schnaffs sat down before a plate of food that remained intact and began to eat. He ate in great mouthfuls as if he was afraid of being interrupted before he had swallowed enough. He shovelled great pieces into his open mouth as if it had been a trap. Sometimes he had to stop, half-choked, and, seizing the cider bottle, take a drink, before he could go on eating again.

He emptied all the plates, all the dishes, and all the bottles, and then he unbuttoned his uniform, dropped his head on his arms, which he crossed on the table, and lost consciousness in a heavy sleep.

* * * * *

It was the cold hour which precedes the dawn. Shadows, numerous and silent, slipped between the trees of the park, and now and then a ray of the setting moon struck a gleam from a steel point gliding through the darkness.

In the great dark *château*, two windows on the ground floor shone out into the night.

A voice thundered out: "Forward! Attack, my boys!"

In a moment, the doors and windows crashed in before an army of men, who threw themselves against the house like an invading torrent. Fifty soldiers rushed into the kitchen where Walter Schnaffs was sleeping peacefully, pointed fifty rifles at his chest, and seized him, rolled him over, and bound him, hand and foot, before he had time to open his eyes.

He gasped for breath, too much bewildered to understand what had happened, and conscious only of fright.

A big officer, brilliant in gold lace, planted his foot on Walter's recumbent form, and vociferated:

"You are my prisoner! Surrender!"

The Prussian knew only the one word "prisoner," and he groaned, "Ja, ja, ja."

He was lifted up, tied to a chair, and examined with great curiosity by his captors, who were blowing like porpoises. Many threw themselves into chairs, overcome by fatigue and emotion.

Walter smiled, for at last he was sure he was a prisoner.

Another officer entered.

"GUARDED BY SIX WARRIORS ARMED WITH REVOLVERS."

"Colonel," he said, "the enemy have all fled. Many seem to have been wounded. We remain masters of the place."

The big officer wiped his forehead, and shouted, "Victory!" Then he took a little notebook from his pocket and wrote—"After a desperate fight, the Prussians had to beat a retreat, carrying away with them their killed and wounded, who are estimated at fifty. Only one prisoner remains in our hands."

"What steps am I to take now, Colonel?" continued the young officer.

"We must retire, so as to avoid a return attack with artillery and superior forces," replied the Colonel, and he gave the order to march.

The column re-formed in the darkness, under the *château* walls, and started, with Walter Schnaffs, well bound, and guarded by six warriors armed with revolvers, in the very middle of the detachment.

Scouts were sent on to see that the road was safe. The column advanced with prudence, halting from time to time.

In the early morning they arrived at the sub-prefecture of La Roche-Oysel. It was the National Guard of La Roche-Oysel which had accomplished this feat of arms.

The excited and anxious population were awaiting the return of the warriors. When they caught sight of the prisoner's spiked helmet a tremendous clamour arose. The young women screamed; the old ones cried; an old man flung his spade at the Prussian, and wounded the nose of one of his guardians.

"Keep a strict watch on the captive!" shouted the Colonel.

They arrived at the town hall. The prison was opened, and Walter Schnaffs, freed from his bonds, was thrown into it.

Two hundred armed men mounted guard round the building.

"MAD WITH JOY, BEGAN TO DANCE LIKE A LUNATIC."

In spite of the symptoms of indigestion which had been tormenting him for some time, the Prussian, mad with joy, began to dance like a lunatic, throwing his arms and legs about, and laughing hysterically, till he fell, exhausted, in a corner.

He was a prisoner! He was saved!

* * *

Thus was the Château of Champignet retaken after only six hours' occupation by the enemy.

Colonel Ratier, cloth merchant, who had commanded the assault, at the head of the National Guard of La Roche-Oysel, was decorated.

How Operatic Artists are Made.

By Elisabeth P. L. MacMorland.

SIGNOR GIOVANNINI.

IN these days, when so many biographies and autobiographies of famous operatic stars are given to the world, and are eagerly devoured by all classes of readers, it may not be out of place to speak of some lesser lights of the vocal profession, who are never likely to be famous, but whose lives possess nevertheless a melancholy interest. Little do those who applaud the brilliant performances of the few, think of the many who are struggling in obscurity. Italy is emphatically the battlefield of unsuccessful singers, who are chiefly of the female gender, for men enter the profession more rarely than women, and leave it more readily when they see no chance of a good opening. In Italy, these unhappy ones are trained. There they begin their career with high hopes destined soon to be dashed to the ground, and there they drag out a precarious and miserable existence. Let us cast a glimpse at them, starting from the time when their own vanity and love of display or the advice of foolish friends has led them to adopt singing as a profession.

A SINGING LESSON AT THE CONSERVATOIRE.

Every opportunity of instruction of a certain sort is offered to the unsuccessful singer in embryo. Teaching can be had gratis at the conservatoires, which are supported by the State, and which are dotted all over the country, and at a cheap rate from private masters. Milan is the great musical centre of Italy, and possesses the conservatoires most celebrated for voice-training, so the course of study adopted there may be regarded as typical of that pursued in other Italian towns.

Forty female and forty male students of singing are admitted into the conservatoire, and are trained by four professors—Signori San Giovanni, Giovannini, Leoni, and Signora Filippi (the widow of the celebrated musical critic who first called the attention of the Italians to Wagner's music, and the only woman who has ever held a post in the conservatoire). The girls are generally much more numerous than the boys, whose numbers have been gradually decreasing till they reached four in 1889. Each master teaches ten girls, who are put into his hands when they enter the conservatoire, and who remain with him during the whole of their course of study. Classes—properly so called—do not exist. The professors have separate rooms, in which they give instruction for two hours on four mornings a week, when each pupil in turn receives a lesson of a few minutes while the others listen. These rooms are fitted up with looking-glasses, in which the girls are expected to study their expressions while they sing, but as their standard of grace is apparently very different from that of ordinary mortals the effect is far from happy. One girl rolled her eyes from one side of the ceiling to the other, a second accentuated each note of her runs by a movement of her under jaw, while a third held her hand pressed tightly to her heart during the whole of her aria.

AN EXAMINATION.

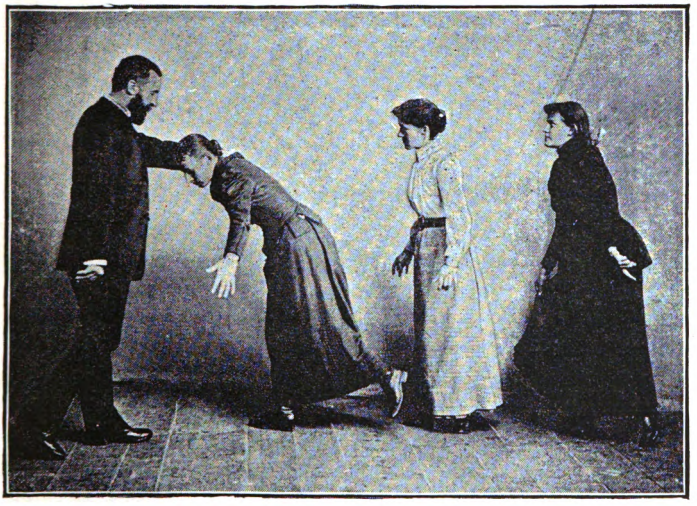
Annual examinations are held in June, and it is whispered that, the examiners being men and Italians, a pretty face, as well as a fine voice and good execution, has something to do with the result. The whole course of study, which lasts four years, is closed by the final examinations, and the presentation of certificates, and the student has then taken a long step in the career of an unsuccessful singer. The petty jealousies, the gossip, and the feuds, which so greatly disfigure the theatrical profession, are foreshadowed in the conservatoire, and often interfere with the smooth course of study. An intercepted love-letter sent to a young lady of fourteen by an equally youthful admirer on the male side of the conservatoire reduced a whole class to tears of mingled envy and sympathy during an entire morning. On another occasion, a hatred of long standing between two female students gave rise to the following disgraceful scene:—Some young lads, friends of one combatant, collected in the street near the door of the conservatoire and greeted her adversary with hisses and with howls of derision till the authorities were at last obliged to interfere. Pupils who take private lessons have more attention paid to them individually than is possible with students of the conservatoire, and make more rapid progress as a rule. Of the teachers in Milan it may be said with truth "their name is legion." The conversation when pupils of different professors meet is often highly amusing.

Miss A. is convinced that her master is the best in the world. She praises his method, his patience, his conscientiousness, she retails the successes of his old pupils, and declares her conviction that her friend, Miss B., would make most remarkable progress under his tuition; while Miss B. is equally pleased with her *maestro*, and intolerant of the slip-shod technique and atrocious style taught to Miss A. Mr. C. has a third teacher, by whom he swears. He pities the ignorance of Miss A. and Miss B., and so on through a whole row of letters. As a rule, the arguments used have no effect, and each pupil remains more than ever faithful to his own professor, but woe betide the unhappy wretch who wavers in his allegiance, for he is lost indeed. One unfortunate young man passed through the hands of twenty different masters, his voice was trained as a tenor, a baritone, and a bass successively, till there was at last so little of it left that he was forced to abandon all hopes of an operatic career.

The students are, as a rule, but scantily provided with worldly goods, and their life is often a hard one. At a house in Milan,

where a number of conservatoire girls live, the price is two francs a day for board and lodging. As the landlady explained, her guests could not expect much for that sum, and ought to be quite satisfied with bread and a good bowl of soup for luncheon and dinner. One great Italian singing master has a taste for wandering, and his unfortunate pupils, who are forced to follow him, have heavy travelling expenses, and are consequently obliged to practise rigid economy in other directions. The straits to which they are sometimes reduced would be amusing were they not proofs of such sad necessity. Two young American baritones, who found it hard to make ends meet, resolved to combine the apparently incongruous occupations of singing and cooking. Every morning before their lesson they issued forth with market-baskets, returning laden with provisions for the day, and after a

A STUDENT.



HOW TO WALK.

course of solfeggios and arias, they prepared their luncheon over a petroleum stove in the passage. At a later date a very conventional and respectable young Englishman, the son of a Church

of England clergyman, who was training for opera, nobody knew why, joined the firm, but as he knew nothing of cooking, he was obliged to occupy the subordinate position of table and kitchen maid. A German girl, with very small means of subsistence, lived on scraps for five days out of the seven, and supported life by dining at the village inn twice a week. The butt of the class, an old lady of sixty, cooked all her food over a spirit lamp in a tiny room, sumptuously furnished with a bed, a table, and a chair. This remarkable woman had once been, according to her own account, the possessor of a lovely voice, which she had lost by false teaching, and had only now partially regained under Signor T.'s tuition. Malicious people declared that her studies would, doubtless, enable her to lead the heavenly choirs of angels, though at her advanced age they could benefit her little here on earth.

When the pupil has gone through a course of study more or less severe, and has run over a certain quantity of operas, the fateful moment of the *débût* has to be considered.

The first thing is to go through a course of dramatic lessons—in which branch of study there are many teachers in Milan. The pupils are first shown how to walk properly, a result which they attain by pacing slowly up and down the room, and pausing for some time on one foot with the other tucked up behind them. Then comes instruction in the art of sitting down, an easy thing in a drawing-room, but a more difficult matter on the stage. After these preliminaries, the student learns the gestures which may be used to denote various emotions. For "io t'amo" (I love thee), one hand is placed upon the heart — located for theatrical purposes well on the left side of the chest — for "io t'adoro" (I adore thee), the heart is pressed by both hands, while the clenched fist is raised above the head to express hatred. Advanced pupils practise the art of trembling to order, and roll on the floor in the agonies of death by poison. In opera, heaven is located in the middle of the

"I LOVE THEE."

"I ADORE THEE."

gallery; thither the singers have to turn their eyes when invoking the powers above. Great attention is paid to facial expression. Sopranos are always gentle in opera, happy in the love of the tenor, and constant under their various afflictions, so they have to wear a sweet smile, while mezzo-sopranos, who impersonate the unsuccessful rivals consumed by jealousy, require to have a stern frown on hand, and to know how to say "Depart" with vigour. Tenors require a great deal of coaching in love-making—an art in which they rarely excel on the stage—baritones must assume as villainous an appearance as possible, while basses have to strive after dignity and respectability in order properly to fill their parts of priests and heavy fathers.

The pupil having acquired some rudiments of dramatic art, has now to take a second step towards the wished-for *débût*. The would-be singer calls upon the theatrical agents licensed by the Government, of whom there are sixteen in Milan, either accompanied by the master or armed with an introduction from him. Young ladies are generally advised to adopt very striking costumes when making these visits, in order that their personality may be more easily remembered, and are recommended to powder and paint, the agents being supposed to dislike faces in their natural state. In an atmosphere redolent with tobacco smoke, and amidst a crowd of loafers and hangers-on of the theatrical profession, who haunt the agencies, the *débutante* performs an operatic aria, while the agent listens, says something complimentary about her voice and attainments, and promises that he will do what he can to further her interests. These promises are mere *façons de parler*, for the agent has probably about twenty young women of equal or greater merit on hand. The competition for engagements is very

TESTING A CANDIDATE.

great. An Italian girl who has to earn her own living much prefers gaining her bread by her voice than by any other means, and young ladies, well off and able to live at home, seek a vocation on the stage, when an English girl would look for occupation in a hospital ward. All the students of the conservatoire, and nearly all the pupils of private masters, intend to adopt singing as a profession, and as there are few concerts and no oratorios given in Italy, their hopes centre on the operatic stage. The opportunities offered to third and fourth rate singers are greater than in any other country, for opera is played in every tiny town at which there is a theatre, or a building which can serve as such. Of course it is beneath the dignity of the stars of the profession to sing at such places, and far beyond the impresario's resources to engage them, so the lesser lights of the profession have their chance.

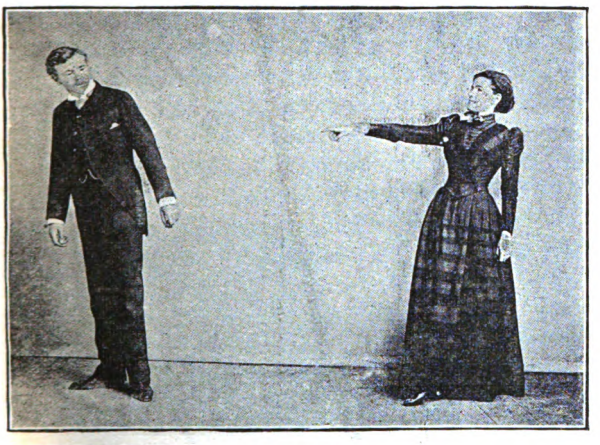
A SOPRANO.

When several applicants of fairly equal merit appear for the same engagement, the agent generally thinks of his own pocket and procures it for the highest bidder. Young singers have often to pay heavily for an opportunity of making their first appearance, and experienced hands who have been "out" for some time will frequently give a considerable sum in order to sing at a good theatre. The preliminaries having been arranged with the agent, the *débutante* is presented to the impresario. One interview of this sort may be regarded as typical. The impresario and the agent, who was displaying the goods he had on hand, arrived at the house of Signora Filippi, one of whose pupils they were to inspect. They were both in a state of great heat and much breathlessness, for the day was warm, the impresario was pressed for time, and in the course of their search they had been running from one end of the town to the other. After they had recovered a little, the *débutante* was introduced, and sang "O mio Fernando" from *La Favorita*—her show piece.

"Fine voice," said the Impresario; "good style, handsome girl."

A MEZZO-SOPRANO.

Madame Filippi broke in in praise of her wares, and assured the gentlemen that her pupil had a most exceptional voice, and would make a perfect Leonore. At the agent's request the young lady performed some parts of *Il Trovatore*, the opera which he wished to give, and, as he expressed himself satisfied, terms were arranged. The *débutante* was to sing for a month without any salary; she was to pay her own expenses and provide her own costumes. When the impresario took his leave, the engagement seemed a settled thing, but there is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip, and many are the hitches ere a duly signed contract finds its way into the singer's hands. In this case, the *débutante* drew back after the contract had been signed, and had, of course, to pay heavy damages. She had heard through her mother that the cast of the opera was bad, the chorus too small and quite inefficient, and the whole affair certain to be a fiasco, in which she too would be involved. It was little comfort, either to mother or daughter, to discover, after another mezzo-soprano had taken the part and the performance had been a complete success, that the stories to which they had lent such a credulous ear had been circulated by an acquaintance of theirs—a theatrical costumier — in a fit of jealousy, because they had ordered the necessary outfit from a rival establishment.



"DEPART."

A successful *début* by no means foreshadows a good career. There are singers who have come out well, and who have never had another chance of treading the boards; many only obtain one or two short engagements during the whole year, while others, who do not seem to possess greater merit, enter at once upon a long line of successes. A pupil from the Milan Conservatoire sang the part of Elsé at the Scala Opera House just six months after her first appearance—a very unusual thing. This success

was, however, obtained in a peculiar manner. She had let herself out to one of the chief Milan agents at a very small salary, on the understanding that all her earnings during three years were to go into his pocket. Of course the agent consulted his own advantage by obtaining for her the best possible engagements, and she, on her side, hoped that by the end of her season of bondage, she would have made a name. and be on the high road to fame and fortune.

Even when the young singer has been fairly well launched on her theatrical career, and sees chances of engagements before her, she is not exactly to be envied. Life behind the scenes of a small provincial theatre is by no means pleasant, especially to people whose early education has made them averse to dirt, untidiness, bad smells, and bad language. The arrangements are often very casual, as the following story shows. A young Italian lady, accustomed to considerable luxury at home, but with a passion for the stage, made her *début* in *La Favorita* at Treviglio, a small provincial town. The theatre was little better than a barn, the door of her dressing-room refused absolutely to shut, and the air circulated freely through the chinks in the wooden walls. She had fortunately just finished her toilette on the opening night, and was waiting for her call, when the director of the orchestra rushed in, his dress much in disorder, his hair almost standing on end. Without further parley, he seized the young lady's comb, and began to tug at his dishevelled locks. Having reduced them to some sort of order, he calmly apologised for his intrusion, explaining that the *prima-donna* was the only person on the premises possessed of a comb. The unhappy *débutante* had hardly recovered from her amazement, when she heard a tremendous babel of tongues. The court costume which had been provided for the tenor, who was to impersonate Fernando, was found lacking in one important particular. There were no stockings. The hour fixed for the beginning of the performance was past ; the audience was growing impatient. In vain did the stage manager implore the tenor to go on stockingless. The tenor, entrenched behind

HOW TO DIE GRACEFULLY.

his sense of modesty, stoutly refused. In this desperate extremity the manager had an inspiration. He captured a chorus-girl with stout legs, ordered her to pull off her stockings, and requested the tenor to draw them on. In spite of the screams and protestations of the young lady, the exchange was effected; the *jeune premier* appeared upon the stage fully clad, while the chorus-girl wore what a mathematical definition of nothing would term a footless stocking without a leg.

As soon as a singer has finished one engagement, she has to make violent exertions in order to obtain another. Armed with any favourable newspaper critiques upon her last performance which she has been able to collect, she starts upon another tour among the agencies. Constant engagement-hunting, rewarded by an occasional performance in some very inferior theatre, forms the career of the unsuccessful singer, till age or misery robs her of her voice. The income she makes is at best just enough to feed, lodge, and clothe her. The typical unsuccessful singer has only one dress, in which she visits the agents and impresarios, and a large assortment of rags for home wear. Singers of a rather higher rank manage to appear at good theatres, but as they never leave Italy, and as the salaries to be obtained there are small, they can only earn a modest competence. Those who perform at the best Italian opera houses, who occasionally go on foreign tours, and who thus earn a considerable income, may fairly be deemed successful, and are therefore beyond the scope of this article.

A TENOR TAKING A HIGH NOTE.

The Milanese, who are looked upon as great musical critics, generally decide to which of the above classes a young singer shall belong, and well aware that from their judgment there is no appeal —in Italy at least—they take matters with a high hand and loudly proclaim their opinion. The greater the reputation which the candidate for their favour enjoys, the more intolerant are they of the slightest shortcoming. It is on record that they hissed Patti for a high note which they considered she did not take quite correctly. At a recent performance of the *Pearl Fishers* at La Scala a most remarkable scene occurred. The tenor engaged for

the part was certainly inefficient, and the audience did not hesitate to show that they knew it. They began to hiss the moment he opened his lips; they greeted his arias with groans of disapproval, and when the unhappy man, instead of quietly accepting his fate, shook his fist at the gallery, a perfectly indescribable hubbub arose. The manager, utterly worsted, had the curtain let down in the middle of a scene, and the performance was thus brought to an untimely end. An Italian audience is, however, as ready to praise as to blame, and is often raised to a pitch of wild enthusiasm by a fine execution of a favourite aria. Rant and noise seem, however, to gain their sympathy as a rule. When a tenor raises himself on tiptoe, and at the risk of breaking a blood-vessel produces an unnaturally high note, the theatre re-echoes with cries of "*Brava! benissimo!*" The sense of dramatic fitness seems sadly lacking both among performers and spectators. *Encores* of striking scenes in operas are frequent, though the interest in the action is thus rudely disturbed, and but scant efforts are made to keep up any illusion. In Italy an opera is little more than a series of arias sung in character. In the first act of *Faust* given at one of the best Milan theatres, the tip of a red plume hove into sight long before Mephistopheles was shot up through a trap-door in the floor. At another theatre in the same town *Dinorah* was played a few nights later. In the third act, as will be remembered, the heroine crosses a raging torrent spanned by a frail bridge, which breaks beneath her weight. Now the *prima-donna*, who was somewhat of a celebrity, refused to precipitate herself into the abyss, though things were made

AN APPEAL TO HEAVEN.

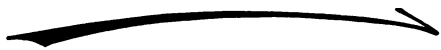
as comfortable as possible with mattresses ; so a double was engaged to take the leap. The singer ran up the path towards the bridge, passed behind a tree, and the double came out from the other side of the trunk. The illusion would no doubt have been complete but for one trifling circumstance. The *prima-donna* was dressed in dark blue, and her *remplaçante* in bright red.

Good strong voices are common in Italy, though they are frequently spoiled by bad training, and often marred by the detestable tremolo—a constitutional defect very hard to conquer. First-rate teachers are rare anywhere—particularly in Italy, where it is impossible for them to command high prices. Of course, there are many excellent Italian masters, but they often emigrate to countries where they can gain more by their art. A notable exception was the late Signor Lamperti, who trained many celebrities of the profession during the last forty years, and who lived and taught in his native land up to his death in May of this year. Many foreign students flock to Italy, attracted no doubt by the cheapness of musical education. Milan is emphatically the town of song. If one hears that a stranger is making a stay of several months in that city, it is only necessary to inquire what sort of a voice he or she possesses. The reason of the sojourn is obvious. The amateur is a rare bird, and it is almost impossible to persuade an Italian that music can be studied for pleasure. Imagine the feelings of a respectable English materfamilias, whose equally dull and respectable daughter is going through a hurried course of singing lessons, calculated to increase her value in the matrimonial market, when her acquaintances assail her with questions as to the probable date of the young lady's *début*, or even offer to intercede on her behalf with the director of some little theatre. Protestations are of no avail, and the insult to Mrs. Grundy must be quietly pocketed. At no time of year can one pass along the Milan streets without hearing from every side exercises, solfeggios, and arias, to which one listens with the sad conviction that the performers either already

"HORROR!"

belong to the class of unsuccessful singers, or are making violent efforts in that direction.

The life which lies before them offers, however, some compensation. In the breast of the female failure, at any rate, hope never dies. She feels certain that her last fiasco was caused by a cold, which prevented her voice from being heard to advantage; by the uninteresting nature of the *rôle* which she had undertaken, or, possibly, by the intrigues of her enemies. One lady who had been struggling vainly for fifteen years felt confident that the road to fame and fortune would lie open before her could she but get a chance of playing Carmen, while another staked all her hopes upon her execution of the high F in *The Sonambula*. A singer's career never demands really hard work, for no voice will stand more than two hours practising a day, and it therefore appeals strongly to the *dolce far niente* element in the Italian character. I think a German friend of ours was not far wrong when he attributed the popularity of the vocal profession to the fact that its followers did not require to enter into the busy whirl of life, but could "sitzen zu haus und schreien" (sit at home and yell).



A Florida Blood Feud.

By Francis Gribble.

Illustrations by J. Greig.

"THE COLONEL."

THE conversation had ranged over American institutions generally, and the words "blood feud" had been used.

"A blood feud?" said the Colonel—he was called the Colonel because his appearance was ferocious, and he had once been a lieutenant in the Alabama Volunteer Irregulars—"in this one-horse country, you have no conception of the meaning of a blood feud."

That was over the fourth glass of Bourbon. The novelist, who was also the host of the evening, pricked up his ears and bade the waiter make haste and bring a fifth.

Meanwhile, warming to his subject, the American proceeded:

"A Corsican vendetta, sir, is child's play to a blood feud in the Southern States. When I was orange growing down in Florida I was the witness of a blood feud which lasted for fifteen years, extinguished two families all but one man, who only escaped his death by an accident, which almost amounted to a miracle."

The novelist made an obvious suggestion.

"No, sir," said the Colonel, "you are wrong. There was no woman in it, at the beginning, and there was no money in it. There was nothing in it, I tell you, but too much bad rye whiskey, and a gun that went off by accident.

"It began in a saloon bar at St. John's. Nat Simmons had been drinking rye whiskey till he was blind. He only used to get that way about once in six months; but, when he did, he always wanted to go and shoot somebody. Most times he was satisfied with shooting a nigger, and, down in Florida, shooting a nigger

doesn't matter a row of pins. But this time he suddenly turned round, knocking two or three glasses off the bar with his elbow, and said:

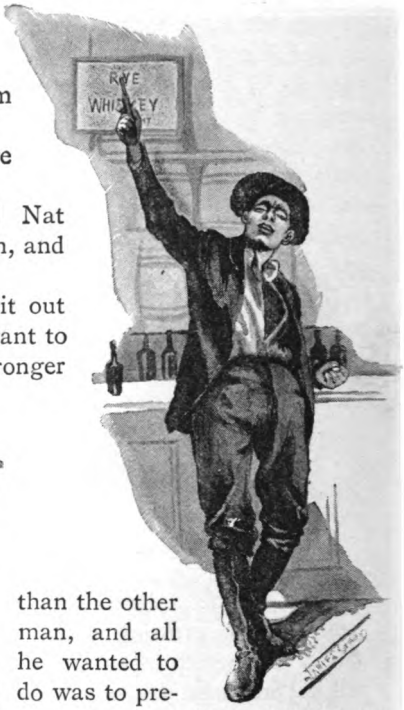
"'Say, boys, I'm going to shoot a Marshal of the United States.'

"He hadn't any quarrel with the Marshal, so far as anybody knew, but being drunk he was bound to do it, unless the Marshal saw what he was after, and shot him first. So, while the other boys just laughed, Joe Martin argued with him, and tried to calm him down a bit.

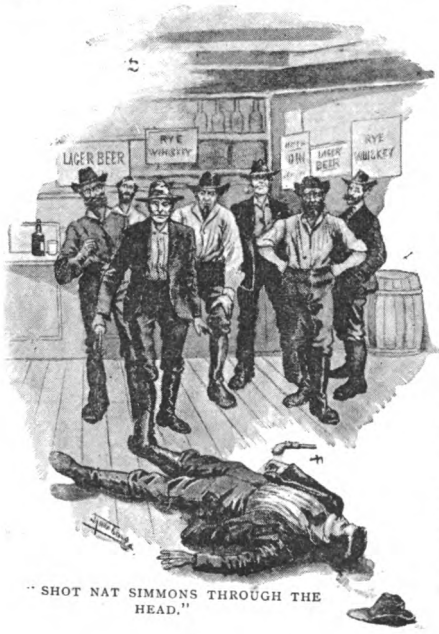
"'Nat Simmons,' he said, 'you're a durned fool.'

"Then there was a row, and Nat Simmons tried to get out of the saloon, and Joe Martin tried to stop him.

"The boys wanted them to fight it out properly with knives; but Joe didn't want to fight at all. He was bigger and stronger than the other man, and all he wanted to do was to prevent him from leaving the saloon and making a fool of himself. Only he didn't let go of his six-shooter in the scrimmage, and something jerked his elbow, and it went off and shot Nat Simmons through the head.



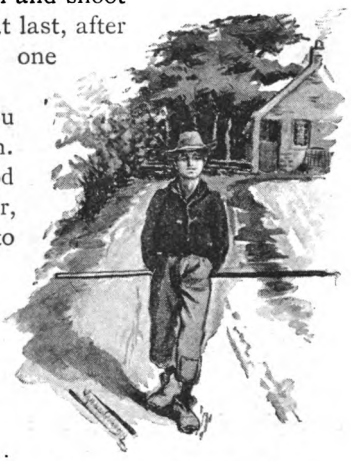
"'I M GOING TO SHOOT A MARSHAL.'"



"SHOT NAT SIMMONS THROUGH THE HEAD."

"Of course there was a verdict of 'accidental death,' but Nat Simmons's relatives were not satisfied, and a few weeks afterwards somebody shot Joe Martin from behind a hedge. There were no witnesses, and you can't identify a bullet from a Winchester rifle, but, as one of Nat Simmons's brothers disappeared from St. John's just at that time, there wasn't very much doubt about the authorship of that murder.

"At any rate, Joe Martin's pals hadn't any doubt about it. It was Dick Simmons, they said, and they vowed they would track Dick Simmons down and shoot him, anyhow. And so they did—shot him like a dog at two o'clock in the morning in one of the back streets of New Orleans. As I told you, this sort of thing went on for years. Wherever a Simmons met a Martin, he shot him, always supposing the Martin didn't shoot the Simmons first. Sometimes their pals used to join in and shoot each other out of sympathy. And, at last, after fifteen years of it, there was only one Martin and one Simmons left.



"YOUNG AMBROSE MARTIN."

"The story I am going to tell you is the story of young Ambrose Martin. He was only a boy when the blood feud began, and somehow or other, when he grew up, he didn't seem to take a proper interest in it.

"Though the man is absent, I will not say he was a coward. But he liked a quiet life, didn't want to shoot anybody, and didn't care any worth speaking of about being shot.

"People told him that, if he wanted a quiet life, he'd got to make a hole in Josh Simmons first; but he concluded to lie low and see whether Josh Simmons would try to make a hole in him.

"This was an arrangement which just suited Josh Simmons. He didn't care a great deal whom he shot, but, on the whole, he preferred shooting a man who looked like taking it lying down. So, one day, he just loaded his Winchester, and strolled promiscuously into Ambrose Martin's orange farm on the St. John's.

"'You air Ambrose Martin?' he asked.

"'You've guessed it.'

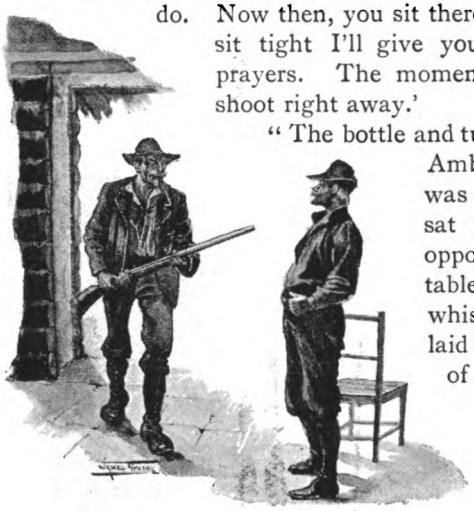
"'Then, if you air Ambrose Martin, you air a durned skunk, and I've come here to shoot you.'

"He was covering him with his rifle as he spoke, and as Ambrose had no weapons in his hands, he was completely at his mercy. However, he kept cool as he replied:

"'So I see. No hurry, I suppose. Sit down and have a drink, and give me time to think it over.'

"The notion of playing with his victim for a few minutes rather tickled Josh.

"'All right,' he said, 'I will. Pour it out for me. That'll do. Now then, you sit there while I drink it. If you sit tight I'll give you time to fix up some prayers. The moment you begin to move I shoot right away.'



"'YOU AIR AMBROSE MARTIN?'"

"The bottle and tumblers were lying handy. Ambrose filled them as he was told, and the two men sat facing one another at opposite ends of the deal table, each with a glass of whiskey by his side. Josh laid his gun down in front of him where he could take it up in a second. Ambrose's was leaning up in a corner of the room, out of reach. He knew he would quickly have a bullet through him if he made a movement to seize it. So he made none, but began to argue.

"'Josh Simmons,' he said, 'I wonder why you want to shoot me. Can't we make an end of this miserable blood feud? I have never done any harm to you. Only last week I could have shot you if I'd wanted to, when you were riding along the road, back of the orange grove. But I didn't.'

"You'll allow he was justified in telling that lie. Josh Simmons didn't know it was a lie, but it didn't seem to strike any chord of gratitude in his bosom.

"'More fool you,' he said; 'now it's my turn.'

"The other went on:

"'But why do you want to kill me, Josh Simmons? What earthly good can you do yourself by killing me?'

"Josh poured himself out some more rye whiskey with his left hand, and swallowed half a tumbler of it at a gulp.

"'You air a Martin,' he said. 'All the Martins air durned skunks. It was a Martin who went all the way down to Springfield, Missouri, a while back, to shoot my brother Abe. I have sworn that I will wipe all the Martins off the face of God's earth, and you air the last of them. If I were in your place I would begin saying my prayers right away.'

"Beaten on this tack, Ambrose tried another, and began to plead for mercy.

"'It isn't my own life,' he said, 'that I care so much about. But I'm thinking, Josh Simmons, of a little girl I left down in Georgia—a sweet dark-eyed little girl who loves me, and was going to marry me. Think of her, Josh. She is poor. She has no one in the world but me to look to. My poor little Cora! If you kill me, you will break her heart, and kill her too. Have you no feelings, man? Have you never known what it is to love, yourself?'

"'A SWEET DARK-EYED LITTLE GIRL WHO LOVES ME.'"

"It was no use. The man's one purpose in life was to avenge his brother's murder on some relative of the murderer. On that ground he was stubborn; it was his idea of duty. Besides, he had finished the whiskey, and rye whiskey is a drink that makes men cantankerous.

"'Seems to me,' he said, 'you air a first-class liar as well as a first-class coward. I shall now give you only two more minutes in which to fix up those prayers.'

"'Only two minutes?'

"'Two minutes if you sit tight. Less than two minutes if you move.'

"But two minutes, as it happened, gave respite more than sufficient. Ambrose Martin's Winchester rifle was standing up in a corner of the room, but he was carrying his six-shooter in his boot. All the time he was arguing, all the time he was pleading for pity, his fingers had been slowly creeping, creeping, creeping down his leg, and slowly creeping, creeping, creeping up again. Now he was armed, and Josh Simmons didn't know it.

"'You mean to shoot me, Josh Simmons?' he asked again.

"'I do. You have exactly one minute more to live.'

"'Then throw up your hands, and may God have mercy on you.'

"So Ambrose Martin cried; and, as he spoke, his revolver shot out from underneath the table, and before he could pick up his Winchester, the last of the Simmonses rolled over on to the floor with a bullet in his brain."

"'THROW UP YOUR HANDS!'

* * *

"That finished the blood feud, Colonel?" inquired the novelist.

"Yes," replied the American. "That finished the fiercest blood feud ever known in Florida. It began with a shot fired by accident, and it ended with a shot fired in self-defence.'

"And about the Georgia girl? Was there any Georgia girl, really, or was he lying?"

"No, sir," said the Colonel. "I won't deny that Ambrose Martin could tell lies at times—more particularly about the location of phosphate beds and the value of real estate—but he was in real downright earnest over that. There *was* a Georgia girl, and her name, if you want to know it, was Cora Floyd; and as soon as Ambrose Martin had stood his trial for murder and been acquitted, he went right along to Atalanta and married her."

Japanese Fighting*

(Self-defence by Sleight of Body).

By G. B. Burgin.
Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.

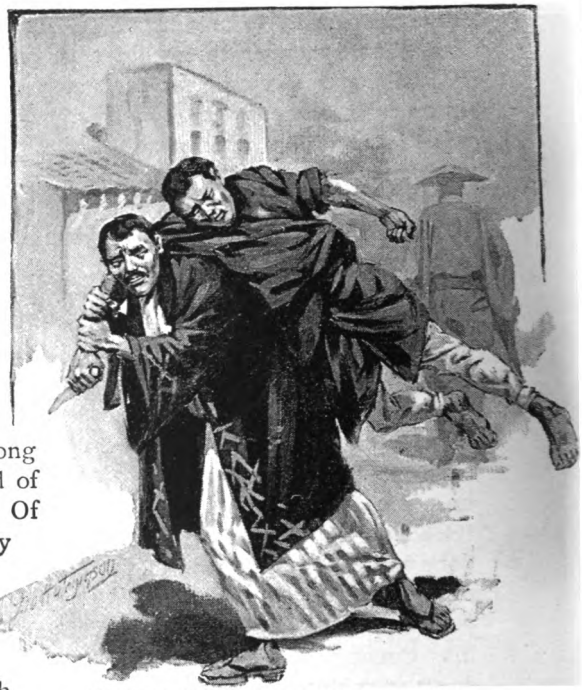
ROUGHLY speaking, Ju-Jitsu may be defined as the art of fighting without weapons, or, sometimes, with small weapons, which was much practised by the Samurai (the aristocratic classes), and less generally by the common people, in the time of the Tokugawas. There are various methods of gaining victory by Ju-Jitsu, such as throwing heavily to the ground; choking up the throat; holding down on the ground or pushing to the wall in such a way that an adversary cannot rise up or move freely; twisting or bending arms, legs, or fingers, so that "an opponent cannot bear the pain," &c. *Atemi* is the art of striking or kicking some parts of the body in order to kill or injure opponents. *Kuatsu*, which means to resuscitate, is the art of resuscitating those who have apparently died through violence. The most important principle in throwing your opponent was to disturb his centre of gravity, and then pull or push in such a way that he could not stand. A series of rules was taught respecting the different motions of the feet, arms, hands, the thigh, and back, which were necessary in order to do this. "Choking up" the throat was done with the hands, forearms, or by "twisting the collar of your opponent's coat round his throat." For holding down or pushing, any part of the body might be employed. For twisting and bending, the arms, hands, fingers, and legs were used. The art of resus-

"CHOKING UP THE THROAT."

* I am greatly indebted to Mr. T. Shidachi, LL.B., of Tokio, who very kindly placed many interesting records at my disposal for the purposes of the above article.

citation was considered a secret, and all pupils had to take a solemn oath not to reveal it. The simplest method of resuscitating a man who had been choked was to embrace the patient from the back, and, placing those edges of the palms of both hands which are opposite the thumb to the lower part of the abdomen, to push it up towards the operator's own body with those edges. Another plan was to place the patient on the ground and push up the abdomen. The other kinds of *Kuatsu*, such as recovering those who had been killed by falling from great heights, strangled, or drowned, &c., were more complicated. It was apparently easier to choke than to resuscitate.

In the remote feudal times of Japan, Ju-Jitsu was one of the military exercises by which the Samurai kept themselves "fit" for the acquisition of anything to which they took a fancy. Since the abolition of the Feudal System, however, the art fell into disuse, but has again, within the last forty years, become popular in Japan among all classes as a method of physical training. Of course, there are many and various schools which teach Ju-Jitsu; but the differences between them are scarcely worth going into. Generally speaking, the principles of the art are—



"NOT TO LOSE ONE'S PRESENCE OF MIND."

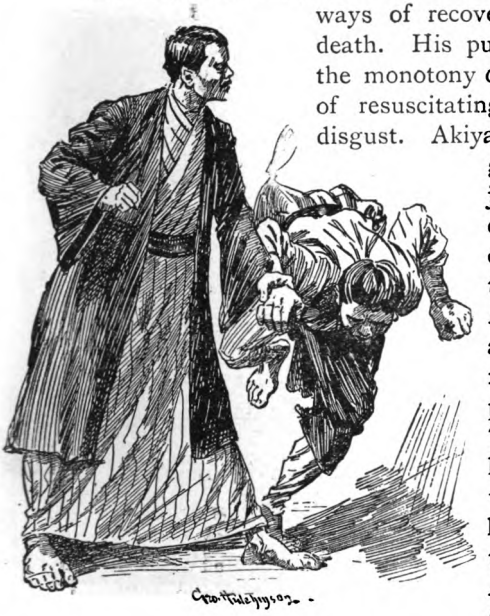
1.—Not to resist an opponent, but to gain victory by seeming to yield.

2.—Not to lose one's presence of mind.

3.—To keep one's temper.

4.—To study the rules of respiration.

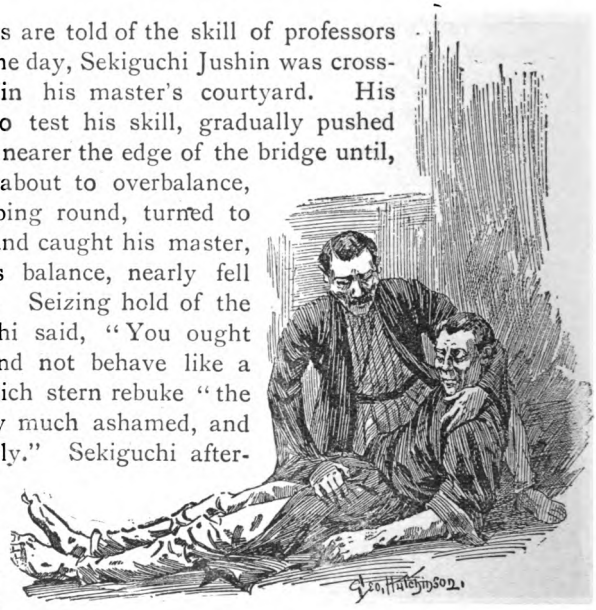
This code goes back as far as the year 1560. Later on, a master of this interesting art arose in the person of Miura Yōshin, who, says the quaint chronicle, believing that many diseases arose from not using mind and body together, invented some fresh theories of Ju-Jitsu. Together with his medical pupils, he found out twenty-one ways of seizing an opponent, and afterwards originated fifty-one additional methods of doing so. There was also another disinterested worthy named Akiyama, who went over to China to study medicine, and there discovered the art called *Hakuda*, which consisted in kicking and striking a man with fatal effect. To counterbalance this, the learned Akiyama found out twenty-eight ways of recovering persons from apparent death. His pupils, however, complained of the monotony of only twenty-eight methods of resuscitating people, and left him in disgust. Akiyama, therefore, "feeling much grieved on this account," journeyed to Tenjin and discovered 303 different methods of the art. It grew to be a truism in Japan that if Akiyama felt annoyed about anything, he promptly invented more methods of scientifically putting people out of the way. This idiosyncrasy was well known to his friends, who, whenever things became a little dull, were accustomed to make slighting remarks on Akiyama's inefficiency as a "death-dealer." Whereupon, Akiyama would retire to some remote region of Japan, and there elaborate further artistic conceptions, such as the swinging throw, for relieving people from the burden of their days. He was always careful to explain that he bore no ill-will to the persons on whom he operated. The matter was purely professional and in the interests of art. But his methods were suddenly destined to undergo a complete revolution. One day, during a snowstorm, he observed a willow tree whose branches were covered with snow. Unlike a pine tree, which stood defiantly



"AKIYAMA'S SWINGING THROW."

erect and broke before the storm, the willow yielded to the weight of snow on its branches, but did not break under it. So Akiyama named his school Yōshin-riu, the spirit of the willow-tree school.

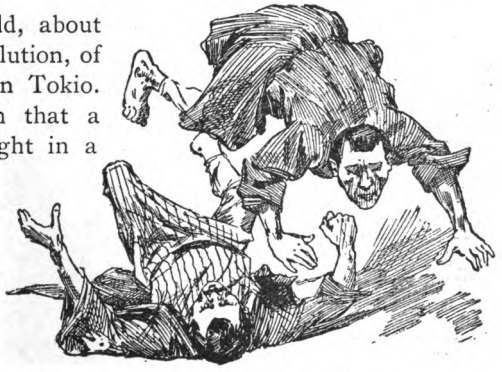
Many stories are told of the skill of professors of Ju-Jitsu. One day, Sekiguchi Jushin was crossing a bridge in his master's courtyard. His lord, in order to test his skill, gradually pushed him nearer and nearer the edge of the bridge until, just as he was about to overbalance, Sekiguchi, slipping round, turned to the other side and caught his master, who, losing his balance, nearly fell into the water. Seizing hold of the prince, Sekiguchi said, "You ought to take care, and not behave like a child." At which stern rebuke "the prince felt very much ashamed, and blushed violently." Sekiguchi afterwards showed the prince that when he caught hold of him he (Sekiguchi) had stuck his *kozuka* (a small knife) through the prince's sleeve just to prove that he could have stabbed him if necessary.



"RESUSCITATING A DEAD MAN."

Tereda Goemon was another noted man in his day. The attendants of a certain prince once ordered Tereda to kneel in the dust until the procession passed. He refused to do this, whereupon five or six attempted to throw him down, but he dashed them to the ground. Many other retainers then came about Tereda, crying, "Kill, kill"; but he threw them all down, seized their *jittei* (short iron rods), and ran over to the prince, saying, "I am a Samurai of high rank, and it is contrary to the dignity of my prince that I should kneel down before so insignificant a princeling as your honourable self. I'm sorry that I had to overthrow your men, but it was necessary to do it in order to preserve my own dignity. Here are the *jittei*, which I return to you." One day, Inugami Gunbei, a celebrated teacher of the Kiu Shin school, met Onogawa Kisaburo, the most famous wrestler of the time, in a tea-house. They drank *saké* together, and Onogawa began to brag, where-

upon Inugami said that even a great wrestler might not be able to defeat an old man like himself. The angry wrestler proposed a trial of strength. Onogawa took hold of Inugami, saying, "Can you escape?" "Of course, if you do not hold me more tightly." Then Onogawa grasped him more firmly, and repeated his question. He did this three times, and when Inugami said, "Can you do no more?" Onogawa, relaxing his grip to take a firmer hold, was in a moment pitched over "upon his honourable back" by Inugami. This he did twice. Onogawa was "so much surprised" that he became Inugami's pupil. Inugami also taught Onogawa how to overcome an enemy by falling down and tripping him up.

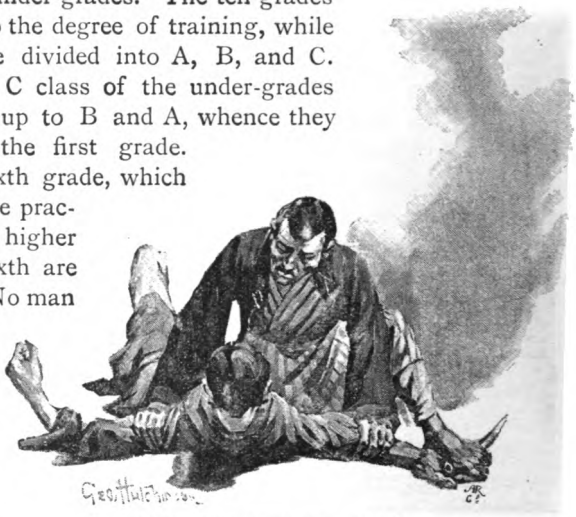


"TRIPPING HIM UP."

Another story is told, about the time of the last Revolution, of an old Ju-Jitsu teacher in Tokio. A rumour reached him that a man appeared every night in a suburban road and mischievously but ingeniously threw down every passer-by. Making up his mind to chastise this fellow, the old teacher disguised himself and went out one night to the place. Suddenly, he was seized by a man from behind and nearly thrown down. In a moment he sank his body, got rid of the enemy's arms, and struck the pit of the man's stomach with his elbow. Seeing his enemy fall, he returned quietly home, and left the apparently dead body in the roadway. Next morning a pupil came to his presence, and, with much sorrow and repentance, said, "I used to attack passers-by every night in a suburb to test my own ability, and just to keep my hand in. Last night, I was there as usual. Seeing a tottering old man come towards me, I seized him from behind and tried to throw him, but he struck me in the pit of the stomach, and the world grew dim to me with the darkness of death. After some time I recovered my senses, rubbed the bitterness out of my stomach, and came home in safety." Without revealing his identity, the old teacher solemnly rebuked the frolicsome pupil, and ordered him not to molest people in future.

The modern school of Ju-Jitsu is now known as the *Kōdōkan*

Jūdo. The word "*Jūdo*" is really no novelty, and means the doctrine of culture by the principle of yielding or pliancy. The Kano school adopts this word in preference to "Ju-Jitsu," for it is not only a physical training, but a moral and intellectual one, the old form, Ju-Jitsu, being solely studied for fighting purposes. The modern Jūdo gives a theoretical explanation of the doctrine, at the same time not omitting the practical part. In the *Kano-Riu*, the whole course is divided into two parts—the grades and the under-grades. The ten grades graduate according to the degree of training, while the under-grades are divided into A, B, and C. Freshmen enter the C class of the under-grades and work their way up to B and A, whence they are admitted into the first grade. They go on to the sixth grade, which is the last step of the practical training. The higher grades above the sixth are for mental culture. No man has yet attained the tenth grade, which requires ten years of the most arduous application. Everyone is taught gratis, but all students take an oath to obey the rules. The police of Tokio are also compulsorily trained in this system.



"DISARMING WITH THE FOOT."

"*Jūdo*" aims at physical, moral, and intellectual training. "It tends to train young people in the habits and state conducive to the accomplishment of great things and objects. It fosters respect and kindness; fidelity and sincerity are the essential points which *Jūdo* students should particularly observe. We come by daily training to know that irritability is one of the weakest points we have to try to avoid in our life, as it facilitates our opponents to avail themselves."

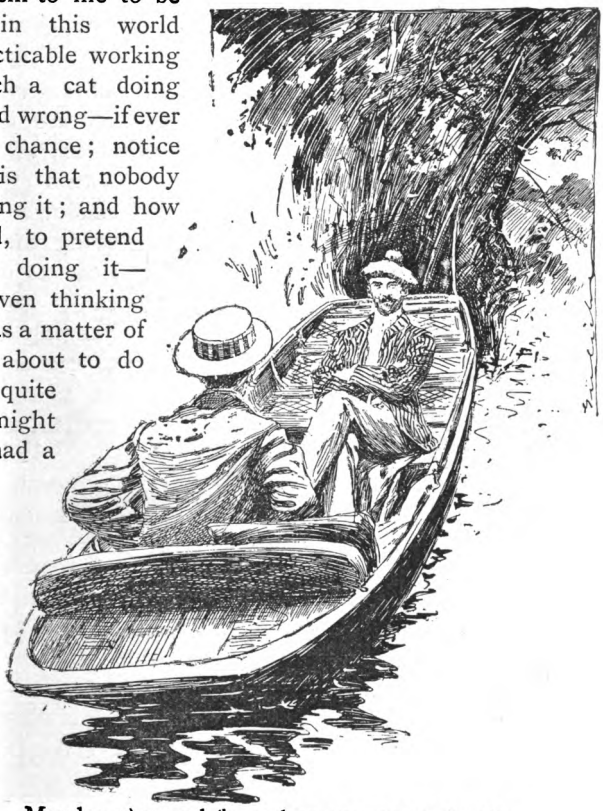
Novel Notes.

By Jerome K. Jerome.

Illustrations by J. Gülich and Louis Wain.

Part VI.

"CATS," remarked Jephson to me, one afternoon, as we sat in the punt discussing the plot of our novel, "cats are animals for whom I entertain a very great respect. Cats and Nonconformists seem to me to be the only things in this world possessed of a practicable working conscience. Watch a cat doing something mean and wrong—if ever one gives you the chance; notice how anxious she is that nobody should see her doing it; and how prompt, if detected, to pretend that she was not doing it—that she was not even thinking of doing it—that, as a matter of fact, she was just about to do something else, quite different. You might almost think they had a soul.

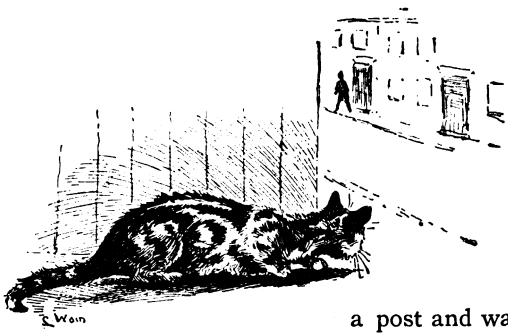


"Only this morning I was watching that tortoiseshell of yours on the house-boat. She was creeping along the roof, behind the flower-boxes, stalking a young thrush that had perched upon a coil of rope. Murder gleamed from her eye, assassination lurked in every twitching muscle of her body. As she crouched to spring, Fate, for once favouring the weak, directed her attention

to myself, and she became, for the first time, aware of my presence. It acted upon her as a heavenly vision upon a Biblical criminal. In an instant, she was a changed being. The wicked beast, going about seeking whom it might devour, had vanished. In its place, sat a long-tailed, furry angel, gazing up into the sky with an expression that was one-third innocence and two-thirds admiration of the beauties of nature. What was she doing there, did I want to know? Why, could I not see, playing with a bit of earth. Surely I was not so evil-minded and uncharitably disposed a person as to imagine she wanted to kill that dear little bird—God bless it.

"Then note an old Tom, slinking home in the early morning, after a night spent on a roof of bad repute. Can you picture to yourself a living creature less eager to attract attention? 'Dear me,' you can all but hear it saying to itself, 'I'd no idea it was so late; how time does go when one is enjoying oneself. I do hope I shan't meet anyone I know—very awkward, its being so light.'

"In the distance it sees a policeman, and stops suddenly within the shelter of a shadow. 'Now what's he doing there,' it says, 'and close to our door too? I can't go in while he's hanging about. He's sure to see and recognise me; and he's just the sort of man to talk to the servants.'



"It hides itself behind a post and waits, peeping cautiously round the corner from time to time. The policeman, however, seems to have taken up his residence at that particular spot, and the cat becomes worried and excited.

"'What's the matter with the fool?' it mutters indignantly; 'is he dead? Why don't he move on, he's always telling other people to. Stupid ass.'

"Just then a far-off cry of 'milk' is heard, and the cat starts up in an agony of alarm. 'Great Scott, hark at that! Why everybody will be down before I get in. Well, I can't help it. I must chance it.'

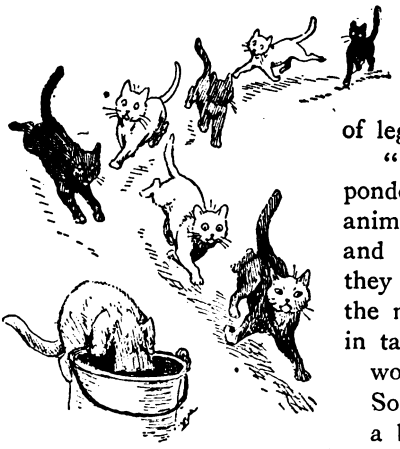
"He glances round at himself, and hesitates. 'I wouldn't mind if I didn't look so dirty and untidy,' he muses; 'people are so prone to think evil in this world.'

"'Ah, well,' he adds, giving himself a shake, 'there's nothing else for it, I must put my trust in Providence, it's pulled me through before: here goes.'

"He assumes an aspect of chastened sorrow, and trots along with a demure and saddened step. It is evident he wishes to convey the idea that he has been out all night on work connected with the Vigilance Association, and is now returning home sick at heart because of the sights that he has seen.

"He squirms in, unnoticed, through a window, and has just time to give himself a hurried lick down before he hears the cook's step on the stairs. When she enters the kitchen he is curled up on the hearthrug, fast asleep. The opening of the shutters awakes him. He rises and comes forward, yawning and stretching himself.

"'Dear me, is it morning, then?' he says, drowsily. 'Heigh-ho! I've had such a lovely sleep, cook; and such a beautiful dream about poor mother.'



"Cats! do you call them? Why they are Christians in everything except the number of legs."

"They certainly are," I responded, "wonderfully cunning little animals, and it is not by their moral and religious instincts alone that they are so closely linked to man; the marvellous ability they display in taking care of 'number one' is worthy of the human race itself. Some friends of mine had a cat, a big black Tom: they have got half of him still. They had reared him from a kitten, and, in their homely, undemonstrative way, they liked him. There was nothing, however, approaching passion on either side.

"One day, a Chinchilla came to live in the neighbourhood, under the charge of an elderly spinster lady, and the two cats met at a garden wall party.

"'What sort of diggings have you got?' asked the Chinchilla.

"'Oh, pretty fair.'

"'Nice people?'

"'Yes, nice enough—as people go.'

"'Pretty willing? Look after you well, and all that sort of thing?'

"'Yes—oh, yes. I've no fault to find with them.'

"'What's the victuals like?'

"'Oh, the usual thing, you know, bones and scraps, and a bit of dog-biscuit now and then for a change.'

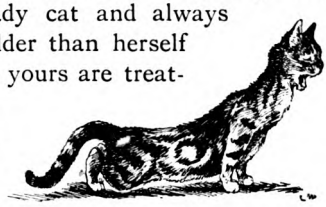
"'Bones and dog-biscuits! Do you mean to say you eat bones?'

"'Yes, when I can get 'em. Why what's wrong about them?'

"'Shade of Egyptian Isis, bones and dog-biscuits! Don't you ever get any spring chickens, or a sardine, or a lamb cutlet?'

"'Chickens! Sardines! What are you talking about? What are sardines?'

"'What are sardines! Oh, my dear child (the Chinchilla was a lady cat and always called gentlemen friends a little older than herself 'dear child'), these people of yours are treating you just shamefully. Come, sit down and tell me all about it. What do they give you to sleep on?'



"'The floor.' "'I thought so; and skim milk and water to drink, I suppose?'

"'It *is* a bit thin.'

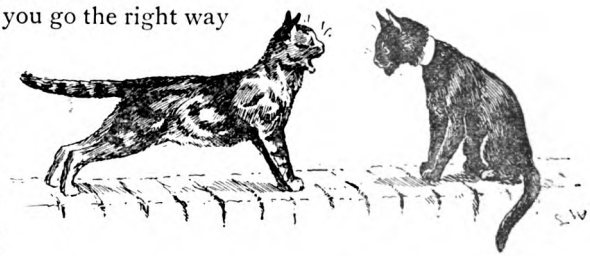
"'I can quite imagine it. You must leave these people, my dear, at once.'

"'But where am I to go to?'

"'Anywhere.'

"'But who'll take me in?'

"'Anybody, if you go the right way to work. How many times do you think I've changed my people? Seven!—and bettered myself on each occasion. Why, do you know where I was born? In a pig-sty. There were three of us, mother and I and my little brother. Mother would leave us every evening, returning generally just as it was getting light. One morning she did not come back. We waited and waited, but the day passed on and she did not return, and we grew hungrier and hungrier, and at last we lay down, side by side, and cried ourselves to sleep.



"'In the evening, peeping through a hole in the door, we saw her coming across the field to us. She was crawling very slowly, with her body close down against the ground. We called to her, and she answered with a low "crroo"; but she did not hasten her pace.

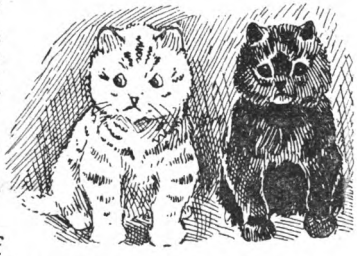
"'She crept in and rolled over on her side, and we ran to her to feed, for we were almost starving. We lay long upon her breasts, and she licked us over and over.

"'I dropped asleep upon her, and in the night I awoke, feeling cold. I crept closer to her, but that only made me colder still, and she was wet and clammy with a dark moisture that was oozing from her side. I did not know what it was at that time, but I have learnt since.

"'That was when I could hardly have been four weeks old, and from that day to this I've looked after myself: you've got to do that in this world, my dear. For a while, I and my brother lived on in that sty and kept ourselves. It was a grim struggle at first, two babies fighting for life; but we did it.

At the end of about three months, wandering farther from home than usual, I came upon a cottage, standing in the fields. It looked warm and cosy through the open door, and I went in: I have always been blessed with plenty of nerve. Some children were playing round the fire, and they welcomed me and made much of me. It was a new sensation to me, and I stayed there. I thought the place a palace at the time.

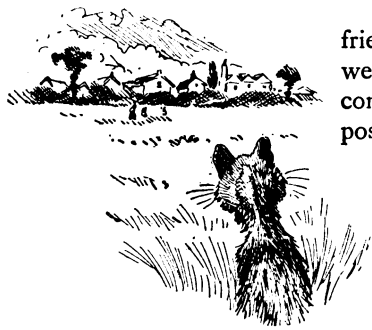
"'I might have gone on thinking so if it had not been that, passing through the village one day, I happened to catch sight of a room behind a shop. There was a carpet on the floor, and a rug before the fire. I had never known till then that there were such luxuries in the world. I determined to make that shop my home, and I did so.'



"'How did you manage it?' asked the black cat, who was growing interested.

"'By the simple process of walking in and sitting down. My dear child, cheek's the "Open sesame" to every door. The cat that works hard dies of starvation, the cat that has brains is kicked downstairs for a fool, and the cat

that has virtue is drowned for a scamp; but the cat that has cheek sleeps on a velvet cushion and dines on cream and horseflesh. I marched straight in and rubbed myself against the old man's legs. He and his wife were quite taken with what they called my "trustfulness," and adopted me with enthusiasm. Strolling about the fields of an evening I often used to hear the children of the cottage calling my name. It was weeks before they gave up seeking for me. One of them, the youngest, would sob herself to sleep of a night, thinking that I was dead: they were most affectionate children.



"'I boarded with my shopkeeping friends for nearly a year, and from them I went to some new people who had lately come to the neighbourhood, and who possessed a really excellent cook. I think I could have been very satisfied with these people, but, unfortunately, they came down in the world, and had to give up the big house and the cook, and take a cottage, and I did not care to go back to that sort of life.

"'Accordingly I looked about me for a fresh opening. There was a curious old fellow who lived not far off. People said he was rich, and certainly everything about him was in very good style. But nobody liked him. He was shaped differently to other men, and he had no friends or relations. I turned the matter over in my mind for a day or two, and then determined to give him a trial. Being a lonely sort of man, he might be led to make a fuss over me, and if not I could go.

"'My surmise proved correct. I have never been more petted than I was by "Toady," as the village boys had dubbed him. My present guardian is foolish enough over me, goodness knows, but she has other ties, while "Toady" had nothing else to love, not even himself. He could hardly believe his eyes at first when I jumped up on his knees and rubbed myself against his ugly face. "Why, Pussy," he said, "you don't mean that you like me;" and as I purred in answer to his caresses, he added, with a queer dry laugh, "Why, Kitty, do you know you're the first living thing that has ever come to me of its own accord." There were tears in his funny little red eyes as he said that.

"'I remained two years with "Toady," and was very happy indeed. Then he fell ill, and strange people came to the house, and I was neglected. "Toady" liked me to come up and lie upon the

bed, where he could stroke me with his long, thin hand, and at first I used to do this. But a sick man is not the best of company, as you can imagine, and the atmosphere of a sick room not too healthy, so, all things considered, I felt it was time for me to make a fresh move.

"'I had some difficulty in getting away. "Toady" was always asking for me, and they tried to keep me with him: he seemed to lie easier when I was there. I succeeded at length, however, and, once outside the door, I put sufficient distance between myself and the house to ensure my not being captured, for I knew "Toady" so long as he lived would never cease hoping to get me back.

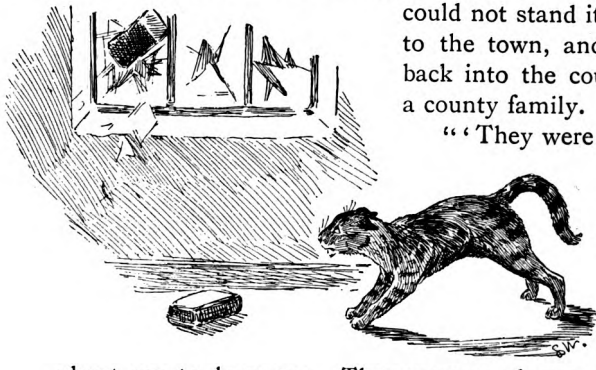
"'Where to go, I did not know. I trusted to luck and judgment, and looked about me. Two or three homes were offered me, but none of them quite suited me. At one place where I put up for a day, just to see how I liked it, there was a dog; and at another, which would otherwise have done admirably for me, they kept a baby. Whatever you do never stop at a house where they keep a baby. If a child pulls your tail or ties a paper bag round your head, you can give it one for itself and nobody blames you. "Well, serve you right," they say to the yelling brat, "you shouldn't tease the poor thing." But if you resent a baby's holding you by the throat and trying to gouge out your eye with a wooden ladle, you are called a spiteful beast, and "shoo'd" all round the garden. If people keep babies, they don't keep me; that's my rule.

"'After sampling some three or four families, I finally fixed upon a banker. Offers more advantageous from a worldly point of view were open to me. I could have gone to a public-house, where the victuals were simply unlimited, and where the back door was left open all night. But about the banker's (he was also a churchwarden, and his wife never smiled at anything less than a joke by the bishop) there was an atmosphere of solid respectability that I felt would be comforting to my nature. My dear

child, you will come across cynics who will sneer at respectability: don't you listen to them. Respectability is its own reward—and a very real and practical reward. It may not bring you dainty dishes and soft beds, but it brings you something better and more lasting. It brings you the consciousness that you are living the right life, that you are doing the right thing, that, so far as earthly ingenuity can fix it, you are going to the right place, and that other folks ain't. Don't you ever let anyone set you against respectability. It's the most satisfying thing I know of in this world—and about the cheapest.

"'I was nearly three years with this family, and was sorry when I had to go. I should never have left if I could have helped it, but one day something happened at the bank which necessitated the banker's taking a sudden journey to Spain, and, after that, the house became a somewhat unpleasant place to live in. Noisy, disagreeable people were continually knocking at the door and making rows in the passage; and at night folks threw bricks at the windows.

"'I was in a delicate state of health at the time, and my nerves could not stand it. I said good-bye to the town, and making my way back into the country, put up with a county family.



"'They were great swells, but I should have preferred them had they been more homely. I am of an affectionate disposition, and I like everyone about me to love me. They were good enough to me in their distant way, but they did not take much notice of me, and I soon got tired of lavishing attentions on people that neither valued nor responded to them.

"'From them I went to a retired potato merchant. It was a social descent, but a rise so far as comfort and appreciation were concerned. They appeared to be an exceedingly nice family, and to be extremely fond of me. I say they "appeared" to be these things, because the sequel proved that they were neither. Six months after I had come to them, they went away and left me. They never asked me to accompany them. They made no arrangements for me to stay behind. They evidently did not care what became of me. Such egotistical indifference to the claims of friendship I had never before met with. It shook my faith—never too robust—in human nature. I determined that, in future, no one should have the opportunity of disappointing my trust in them. I selected my present mistress on the recommendation of a gentleman friend of mine who had formerly lived with her. He said she was an excellent caterer. The only reason he had left her was that she expected him to be in at ten each night, and that hour didn't fit in with his other arrangements. It made no difference to me—as a matter of fact, I do not care for these midnight *réunions* that are so popular amongst us. There are always too many cats for one properly to enjoy oneself, and sooner or later a rowdy element is sure to creep in. I offered myself to her, and she accepted me gratefully. But I have never liked her, and never shall. She is a silly old woman, and bores me. She is, however, devoted to me, and, unless something extra attractive turns up, I shall stick to her.

"'That, my dear, is the story of my life, so far as it has gone. I tell it you to shew you how easy it is to be "taken in." Fix on your house, and mew piteously at the back door. When it is opened run in and rub yourself against the first leg you come across. Rub hard, and look up confidingly. Nothing gets round human beings, I have noticed, quicker than confidence. They don't get much of it, and it pleases them. Always be confiding. At the same time, of course, be prepared for emergencies. If you are still doubtful as to your reception, try and get yourself slightly

wet. Why people should prefer a wet cat to a dry one I have never been able to understand; but that a wet cat is practically sure of being taken in and gushed over, while a dry cat is liable to have the garden hose turned upon it, is an undoubted fact. Also, if you can possibly manage it, and it is offered you, eat a bit of dry bread. The Human Race is always stirred to its deepest depths by the sight of a cat eating a bit of dry bread.'

"My friend's black Tom profited by the Chinchilla's wisdom. A catless couple had lately come to live next door. He determined to adopt them on trial. Accordingly, on the first rainy day, he went out soon after lunch and sat for four hours in an open field. In the evening, soaked to the skin, and feeling pretty hungry, he went mewing to their door. One of the maids opened it, he rushed under her skirts and rubbed himself against her legs. She screamed, and down came the master and the mistress to know what was the matter.

"'It's a stray cat, mum,' said the girl.

"'Turn it out,' said the master.

"'Oh, no, don't,' said the mistress.

"'Oh, poor thing, it's wet,' said the housemaid.

"'Perhaps it's hungry,' said the cook.

"'Try it with a bit of dry bread,' sneered the master, who wrote for the newspapers, and thought he knew everything.

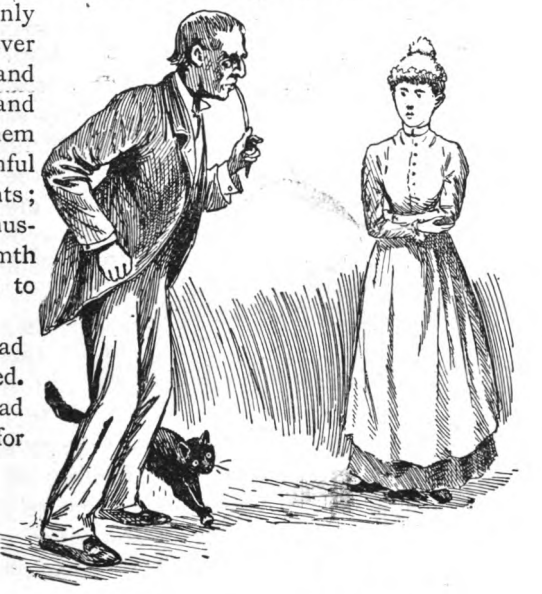
"A stale crust was proffered. The cat ate it greedily, and afterwards rubbed himself gratefully against the man's light trousers.

"This made the man ashamed of himself, likewise of his trousers. 'Oh, well, let it stop if it wants to,' he said.

"So the cat was made comfortable, and stayed in.

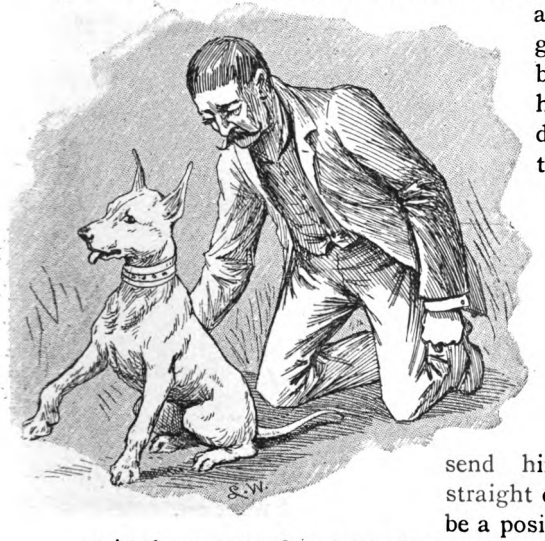
"Meanwhile its own family were seeking for it high and low. They had never cared two straws for it while they had had it; now it was gone, they were inconsolable. In the light of its absence, it appeared to them the one thing that had made the place home. The shadows of suspicion gathered round the case. The cat's disappearance, at first regarded as a mystery, began to assume the shape of a crime. Each member of the family strongly suspected

every other member, and felt it to be his or her duty to discover and expose them. The wife openly accused the husband of never having liked the animal, and more than hinted that he and the gardener between them could give a tolerably truthful account of its last moments; an insinuation that the husband repudiated with a warmth that only added credence to the original surmise.



"The bull-terrier was had up and searchingly examined. Fortunately for him, he had not had a single fight for two whole days. Had any recent traces of blood been detected upon him, it would have gone hard with him.

"The person who suffered most, however, was the youngest boy. Three weeks before, he had dressed the cat in doll's clothes and taken it round the garden in the perambulator. He himself had forgotten the incident, but Justice, though tardy, was on his track. The misdeed was suddenly remembered at the very moment when unavailing regret for the loss of the favourite was at its deepest, so that to box his ears and send him, then and there, straight off to bed was felt to be a positive relief.



"At the end of a fortnight, the cat, finding he had not, after all,

bettered himself very much, came back. The family were so surprised that at first they could not be sure whether he was flesh and blood, or a spirit come to comfort them. After watching him eat half a pound of raw steak, they decided he was material, and caught him up and hugged him to their bosoms. For a week they over-fed him and made much of him. Then, the excitement cooling, he found himself dropping back into his old position, and didn't like it, and went next door again.

"The next door people had also missed him, and they likewise greeted his return with extravagant ebullitions of joy.

"This gave the cat an idea. He saw that his game was to play the two families off one against the other; which he did. He spent an alternate fortnight with each, and lived like a fighting cock. His return was always greeted with enthusiasm, and every means were adopted to induce him to stay. His little whims were carefully studied, his favourite dishes kept in constant readiness.

"The destination of his goings leaked out at length, and then the two families quarrelled about him over the fence. My friend accused the newspaper man of having lured him away. The newspaper man retorted that the poor creature had come to his door wet and starving, and added that he would be ashamed to keep an animal merely to ill-treat it. They have a row about him twice a week on the average. It will probably come to blows one of these days."

Jephson appeared much surprised by this story. He remained thoughtful and silent. I asked him if he would like to hear any more, and as he offered no active opposition I went on. (Maybe he was asleep; that idea did not occur to me at the time.)

I told him of my grandmother's cat, who, after living a blame-

less life for upwards of eleven years, and bringing up a family of something like sixty-six, not counting those that died in infancy and the waterbutt, took to drink in her old age, and was run over while in a state of intoxication (oh, the justice of it!) by a brewer's dray. I have read in temperance tracts that no dumb animal will touch a drop of alcoholic liquor. My advice is, if you wish to keep them respectable, don't give them a chance to get at it. I knew a pony——. But never mind him; we are talking about my grandmother's cat.

A leaky beer-tap was the cause of her downfall. A saucer used to be placed underneath it to catch the drippings. One day the cat, coming in thirsty, and finding nothing else to drink, lapped up a little, liked it, and lapped a little more, went away for half-an-hour, and came back and finished the saucerful. Then sat down beside it, and waited for it to fill again.

From that day till the hour she died, I don't believe that cat was ever once quite sober. Her days she passed in a drunken stupor before the kitchen fire. Her nights she spent in the beer cellar.

My grandmother, shocked and grieved beyond expression, gave up her barrel and adopted bottles. The cat, thus condemned to enforced abstinence, meandered about the house for a day and a half in a disconsolate, quarrelsome mood. Then she disappeared, returning at eleven o'clock as tight as a drum.

Where she went, and how she managed to procure the drink, we never discovered; but the same programme was repeated every day. Some time during the morning she would contrive to elude our vigilance and escape; and late every evening she would come reeling home across the fields in a condition that I will not sully my pen by attempting to describe.

It was on Saturday night that she met the sad end to which I have before alluded. She must have been very drunk, for the man told us that, in consequence of the darkness, and the fact that his horses were tired, he was proceeding at little more than a snail's pace.

I think my grandmother was rather relieved than otherwise. She had been very fond of the cat at one time, but its recent

conduct had alienated her affection. We children buried it in the garden under the mulberry tree, but the old lady insisted that there should be no tombstone, not even a mound raised. So it lies there, unhonoured. in a drunkard's grave.

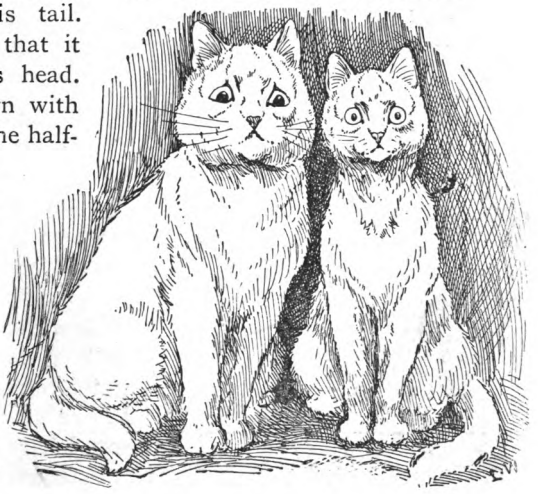
I also told him of another cat our family had once possessed. She was the most motherly thing I have ever known. She was never happy without a family. Indeed, I cannot remember her when she hadn't a family in one stage or another. She was not very particular what sort of a family it was. If she could not have kittens, then she would content herself with puppies or rats. Anything that she could wash and feed seemed to satisfy her. I believe she would have brought up chickens if we had entrusted them to her.

All her brains must have run to motherliness, for she hadn't much sense. She could never tell the difference between her own children and other people's. She thought everything young was a kitten. We once mixed up a spaniel puppy that had lost its own mother among her progeny. I shall never forget her astonishment when it first barked. She boxed both its ears, and then sat looking down at it with an expression of indignant sorrow that was really touching.

"You're going to be a credit to your mother," she seemed to be saying; "you're a nice comfort to anyone's old age, you are, making a row like that. And look at your ears flopping all over your face. I don't know where you pick up such ways."

He was a good little dog. He did try to mew, and he did try to wash his face with his paw, and to keep his tail still, but his success was not commensurate with his will. I do not know which was the sadder to reflect upon, his efforts to become a creditable kitten, or his foster-mother's despair of ever making him one.

Later on we gave her a baby squirrel to rear. She was nursing a family of her own at the time, but she adopted him with enthusiasm, under the impression that he was another kitten, though she could not quite make out how she had come to overlook him. He soon became her prime favourite. She liked his colour, and took a mother's pride in his tail. What troubled her was that it would cock up over his head. She would hold it down with one paw, and lick it by the half-hour together, trying to make it set properly. But the moment she let it go up it would cock again. I have heard her cry with vexation because of this.



One day a neighbouring cat came to see her, and the squirrel was clearly the subject of their talk.

"It's a good colour," said the friend, looking critically at the supposed kitten, who was sitting up on his haunches combing his whiskers, and saying the only truthfully pleasant thing about him that she could think of.

"He's a lovely colour," exclaimed our cat proudly.

"I don't like his legs much," remarked the friend.

"No," responded his mother thoughtfully, "you're right there. His legs are his weak point. I can't say I think much of his legs myself."

"Maybe they'll fill out later on," suggested the friend, kindly.

"Oh, I hope so," replied the mother, regaining her momentarily dashed cheerfulness. "Oh, yes, they'll come all right in time. And then look at his tail. Now, honestly, did you ever see a kitten with a finer tail?"

"Yes, it's a good tail," assented the other; "but why do you do it up over his head?"

"I don't," answered our cat. "It goes that way. I can't make it out. I suppose it will come straight as he gets older."

"It will be awkward if it don't," said the friend.

"Oh, but I'm sure it will," replied our cat. "I must lick it more. It's a tail that wants a good deal of licking, you can see that."

And for hours that afternoon, after the other cat had gone, she sat trimming it; and, at the end, when she lifted her paw off it, and it flew back again like a steel spring over the squirrel's head, she sat and gazed at it with feelings that only those among my readers who have been mothers themselves will be able to comprehend.

"What have I done," she seemed to say—"what have I done that this trouble should come upon me?"

Jephson roused himself on my completion of this anecdote and sat up.

"You and your friends appear to have been the possessors of some very remarkable cats," he observed.

"Yes," I answered, "our family has been singularly fortunate in its cats."

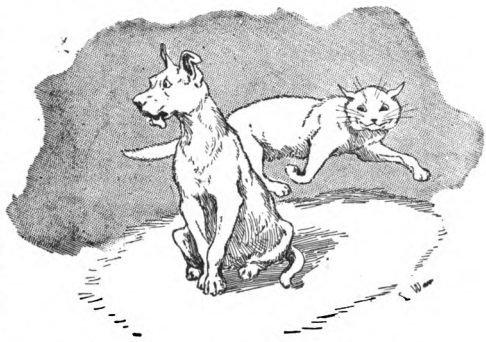
"Singularly so," agreed Jephson; "I have never met but one man from whom I have heard more wonderful cat talk than, at one time or another, I have from you."

"Oh," I said, not, perhaps, without a touch of jealousy in my voice, "and who was he?"

"He was a seafaring man," replied Jephson. "I met him on a Hampstead tram, and we discussed the subject of animal sagacity.

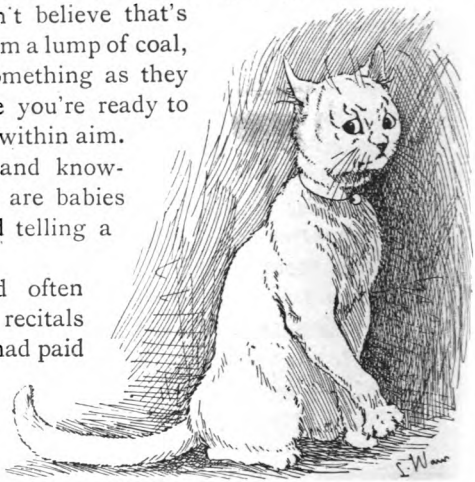
"'Yes, sir,' he said, 'monkeys is cute. I've come across monkeys as could give points to one or two lubbers I've sailed under; and elephants is pretty spry, if you can believe all that's told of 'em. I've heard some tall tales about elephants. And, of course, dogs has their heads screwed on all right: I don't say as they ain't. But what I do say is: that for straightfor'ard,

level-headed reasoning, give me cats. You see, sir, a dog, he thinks a powerful deal of a man—never was such a cute thing as a man, in a dog's opinion; and he takes good care that everybody knows it. Naturally enough, we says a dog is the most intellectual animal there is. Now a cat, she's got her own opinion about human beings. She don't say much, but you can tell enough to make you anxious not to hear the whole of it. The consequence is, we says a cat's got no intelligence. That's where we let our prejudice steer our judgment wrong. In a matter of plain common sense, there ain't a cat living as couldn't take the lee side of a dog and fly round him. Now, have you ever noticed a dog at the end of a chain, trying to kill a cat as is sitting washing her face three-quarters of an inch out of his reach? Of course you have. Well, who's got the sense out of those two? The cat knows that it ain't in the nature of steel chains to stretch. The dog, who ought, you'd think, to know a durned sight more about 'em than she does, is sure they will if you only bark loud enough.



"'Then again, have you ever been made mad by cats screeching in the night, and jumped out of bed and opened the window and yelled at them? Did they ever budge an inch for that, though you shrieked loud enough to skeer the dead, and waved your arms about like a man in a play? Not they. They've turned and looked at you, that's all. "Yell away, old man," they've said, "we like to hear you: the more the merrier." Then what have you done? Why, you've snatched up a hairbrush, or a boot, or a candlestick, and made as if you'd throw it at them. They've seen your attitude,

they've seen the thing in your hand, but they ain't moved a point. They knew as you weren't going to chuck valuable property out of window with the chance of getting it lost or spoiled. They've got sense themselves, and they give you credit for having some. If you don't believe that's the reason, you try shewing them a lump of coal, or half a brick, next time—something as they know you *will* throw. Before you're ready to heave it, there won't be a cat within aim.



"'Then as to judgment and knowledge of the world, why dogs are babies to 'em. Have you ever tried telling a yarn before a cat, sir?

"I replied that cats had often been present during anecdotal recitals of mine, but that, hitherto, I had paid no particular attention to their demeanour.

"'Ah, well, you take an opportunity of doing so one day, sir,' answered the old fellow; 'it's worth the experiment. If you're telling a story before a cat, and she don't get uneasy during any part of the narrative, you can reckon you've got hold of a thing as it will be safe for you to tell to the Lord Chief Justice of England.

"'I've got a messmate,' he continued; 'William Cooley is his name. We call him Truthful Billy. He's as good a seaman as ever trod quarter-deck; but when he gets spinning yarns he ain't the sort of man as I could advise you to rely upon. Well, Billy, he's got a dog, and I've seen him sit and tell yarns before that dog that would make a cat squirm out of its skin, and that dog's taken 'em in and believed 'em. One night, up at his old woman's, Bill told us a yarn, by the side of which salt junk two voyages old would pass for spring chicken. I watched the dog to see how he would take it. He listened to it from beginning to end with cocked ears, and never so much as blinked. Every now and then he would look round with an expression of astonishment or delight that seemed to say: "Wonderful, isn't it!" "Dear me, just

think of it!" "Did you ever!" "Well, if that don't beat everything!" He was a chuckle-headed dog; you could have told him anything.

"'It irritated me that Bill should have such an animal about him to encourage him, and when he had finished I said to him, "I wish you'd tell that yarn round at my quarters one evening."

"'Why?' said Bill.

"'Oh, it's just a fancy of mine,' I says. I didn't tell him I was wanting my old cat to hear it.

"'Oh, all right,' says Bill, 'you remind me.' He loved yarning, Billy did.

"'Next night but one he slings himself up in my cabin, and I does so. Nothing loth, off he starts. There was about half-a-dozen of us stretched round, and the cat was sitting before the fire fussing itself up. Before Bill had got fairly under weigh, she stops washing and looks up at me, puzzled like, as much as to say, "What have we got here, a missionary?" I signalled to her to keep quiet, and Bill went on with his yarn. When he got to the part about the sharks, she turned deliberately round and looked at him. I tell you there was an expression of disgust on that cat's face as might have made a travelling Cheap Jack feel ashamed of himself. It was that human, I give you my word, sir, I forgot for the moment as the poor animal couldn't speak. I could see the words that were on its lips: "Why don't you tell us you swallowed the anchor?" and I sat on tenter-hooks, fearing each instant that she would say them aloud. It was a relief to me when she turned her back on Bill.

"'For a few minutes she sat very still, and seemed to be wrestling with herself like. I never saw a cat more set on controlling its feelings, or that seemed to suffer more in silence. It made my heart ache to watch it.

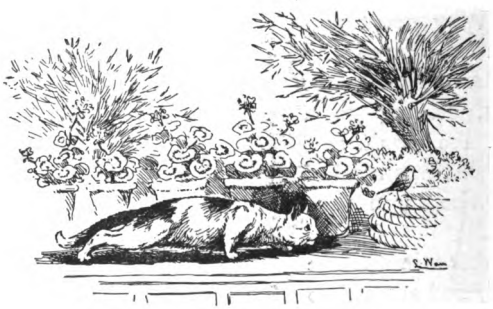
"'At last Bill came to the point where he and the Captain between 'em hold the shark's mouth open while the cabin-boy dives in head foremost, and fetches up, undigested, the gold watch and chain as the bo'sun was a wearing when he fell overboard; and at that the old cat giv'd a screech, and rolled over on her side with her legs in the air.

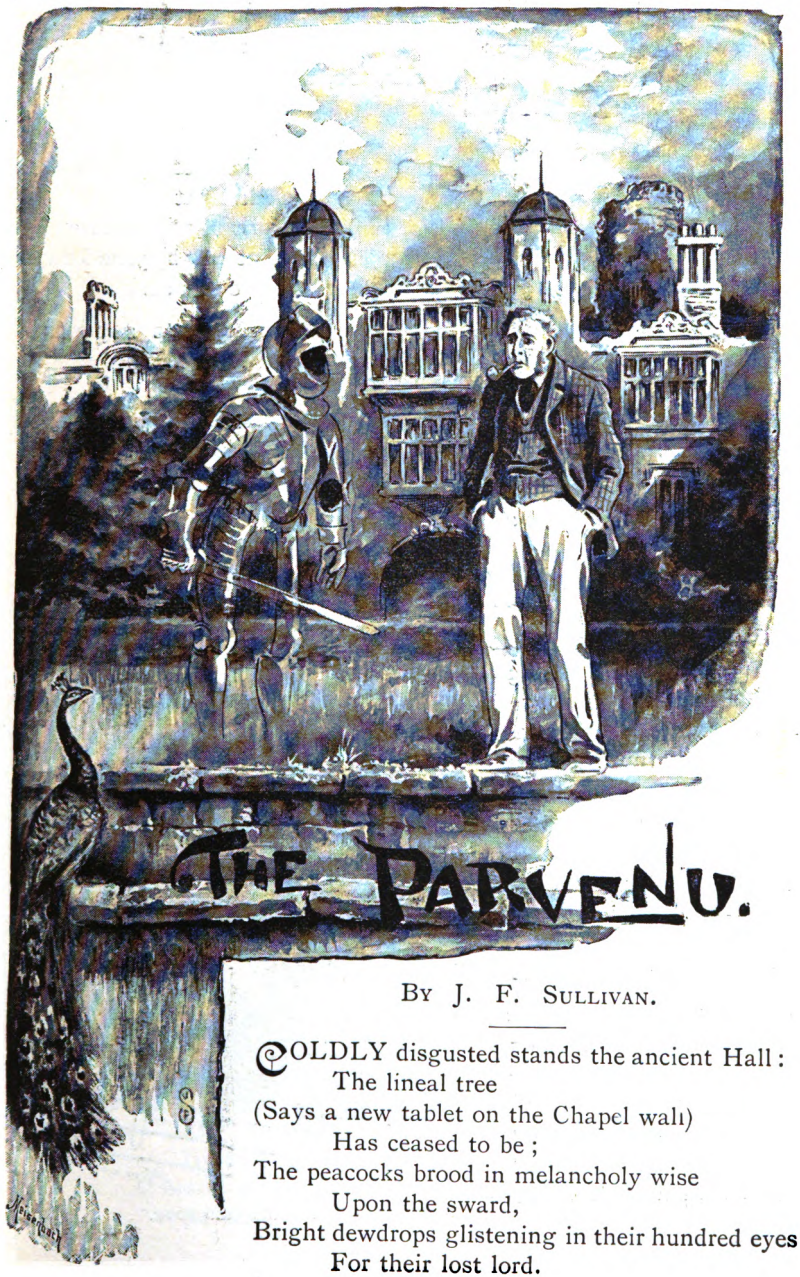
"'I thought at first the poor thing was dead, but she rallied after a bit, and it seemed as though she had braced herself up to hear the thing out.

"'But a little further on, Bill got too much for her again, and this time she owned herself beat. She rose up and looked round at us: "You'll excuse me, gentlemen," she said—leastways that is what she said if looks go for anything—"maybe you're used to this sort of rubbish, and it don't get on your nerves. With me it's different. I guess I've heard as much of this fool's talk as my constitution will stand, and if it's all the same to you I'll get outside before I'm sick."

"'With that she walked up to the door, and I opened it for her, and she went out.

"'You can't fool a cat with talk same as you can a dog.'"





THE PARVENU.

By J. F. Sullivan.

COLDLY disgusted stands the ancient Hall:
The lineal tree
(Says a new tablet on the Chapel wall)
Has ceased to be;
The peacocks brood in melancholy wise
Upon the sward,
Bright dewdrops glistening in their hundred eyes
For their lost lord.

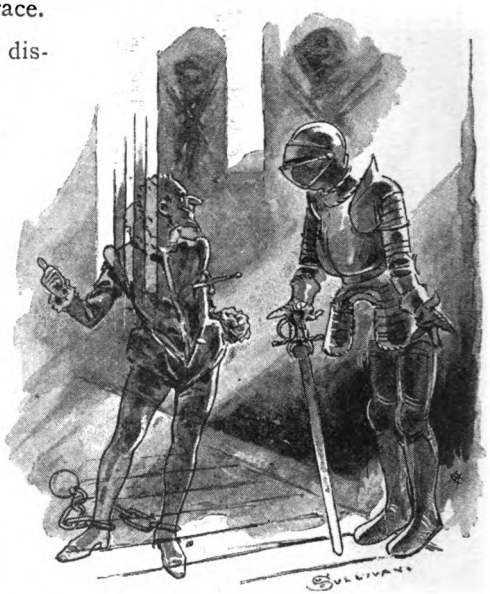
"SMITH."

Brave in the hall the falchions of his sires
That won the land;
His, too, that generous spirit which acquires—
On every hand
He would enclose ere commoners could light
Their smouldering sense;
Nor yielded he to any bygone knight
In tricks of fence.

The grand old turrets swelled in loftier pride
To daily see
His hundred other failings, sanctified
By pedigree:
Nor was he tall, impressing with a sense
Of lordly grace;
His features gave no outward evidence
Of noble race.

What, though, with easy disregard that springs
From many a year
Of ownership of venerable things,
He chose to rear
A grand Byzantine billiard-room, with tall,
Sublimely new
Corinthian columns, on a Tudor hall?
His blood was blue.

But vanished now, as though an empty myth,
The pride of race;
For one most pitifully known as Smith
Has bought the place—



"THE HAUNTED ROOM."

Successor to the wealth that traders win ;
Without pretence
To " birth "—so truly non-existent in
The highest sense.

A dunce ? Well, no—as cultured as you will
It must be said ;
A boor ? Why, no—refined enough : but still
His blood is *red ;*
And this the venerable turrets heed,
And scowl askance,
Their narrow-windowed bosoms pierced indeed
As with a lance.

Then over all a noticeable change
Begins to fall :
Shrinks day by day in loftiness and range
The banquet-hall ;
Shrinks inch by inch the mediæval keep
From dawn to dawn ;
The peacocks' tails grew narrower in their sweep
Upon the lawn ;

From day to day the hoary timber grows
Less gnarled and grey ;
Less moss the sundial on the terrace shows
From day to day ;
And in the haunted room the hollow sigh,
The ghostly light,
The sound of fettered footsteps passing by,
No more affright.

With downcast eye the snubbed intruder slinks
In deep disgrace ;
And still in age and measure slowly shrinks
The haughty place ;
Until one day, as morn dispels the dark,
He sadly sees
A brand-new villa in a new-made park
Of sapling trees.

" HE SADLY SEES.

At the Rising of the Moon.

A Moonlighter's Apology.

By Frank Mathew.

Illustrations by F. Pegram.

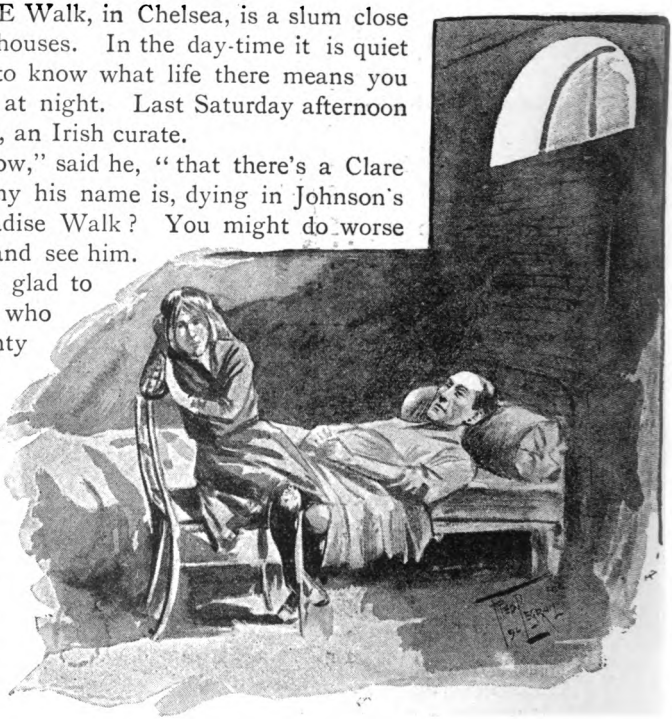
"O, then tell me, Shawn O'Ferrall, where the gatherin' is to be?"
"In the old spot by the river, right well known to you and me;
One word more—for signal token, whistle up the marchin' tune,
With your pike upon your shoulder, at the Risin' o' the Moon."

"The Rising of the Moon."

PARADISE Walk, in Chelsea, is a slum close to big houses. In the day-time it is quiet enough, but to know what life there means you should see it at night. Last Saturday afternoon I met a friend, an Irish curate.

"D'ye know," said he, "that there's a Clare man, McCarthy his name is, dying in Johnson's house in Paradise Walk? You might do worse now than go and see him. He'd be right glad to see anyone who knows County Clare, and I've little time to give him myself."

Well, as my hands were free then, I strolled down to the slum. The man who christened it had a fine sense of humour.



"He had nearly done with life."

I found McCarthy in a cellar, lit only by a dirty skylight. He was lying on a mattress with a heap of rags over him for bed-clothes. A small girl was with him; he was talking to her in a

monotonous voice like a man in a fever. She was not listening, I think, and soon after I came she slipped out. It was easy to see that he had nearly done with life.

"From th' ould counthry, sorr?" he said, in a weak voice. "Sorr, ye're kindly welcome."

I took a seat by him, a ricketty chair.

"Yis, sorr, McCaura me name is—Michael McCaura, from Moher. McCarthy they call me here. An' ye know Moher? 'Tis a weary long way from here."

Then suddenly I remembered him, this was Michael McCaura, who used to live hard by the Liscannor bog, about a mile from the sea, half a farmer and half a fisherman. He lived in a little mean cabin by the wayside; it was built roughly of stone, and long grass and snap-dragon flourished on its thatched roof. When I was staying at Castle Desmond, he was pointed out to me as a dangerous man, a moonlighter and a ringleader in mischief. He looked much older now, and was broken by sickness.

"A cruil long way," he went on. "Ah! what wudn't I give to be there now, thrampin' along the Liscannor road, leadin' th' ould mare wid the carrt creakin' ahind her, past the fields where the lasses are sthoopin' diggin' the 'taters, an' the farrms where ivery livin' soul has a kind look for ye, an' a kind worrd; an' the dogs thimsilves—faith, an' the pigs too—are glad to see ye as ye go by. What *wudn't* I give to dhrive int' Ennistimon Fair in the raw of the morrn, wid all the cattle lowin', an' all the fowls clutherin', an' all the pigs, the craythurs, gruntin', an' all the small bovuns an' the slips, squealin' as if they were kilt. But I'm past prayin' for."

LEADIN' TH OULD MARE.

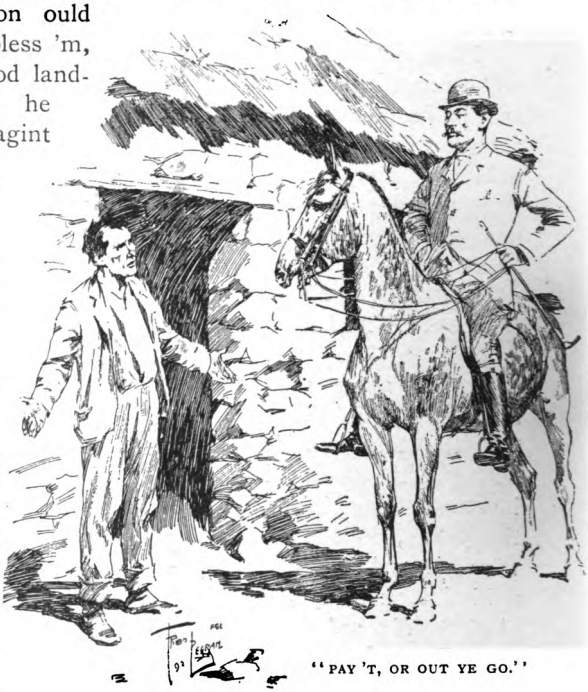
I was hardly listening to him. In the room overhead there were shrieks and curses. Johnson, the cabman, was drunk, and was jumping on his wife. Nobody interfered with him, it was nobody's business, the woman was used to it.

I asked McCaura why he left Moher.

"Is it why I lift Moher, sorr? There's no need o' hidin' 't now, little can annyone harrm me. I'm ayond throublin'. An' did y'iver hear tell of Healy's Farrm, sorr?"

Then at once I was all ears, for everyone in Ireland—from Malin Head to Mizen Head—knows of the grim fight at Healy's Farm out by Lisdoonvarna in Clare.

"'Tis a long sthory, sorr, an' 'tis aisy to blame 's—whin did a gintleman iver understhand 's?—'tisn't in Nature. Whin I was a bit of a gossoon ould Corney Desmond—bless 'm, 'twas he was the good landlord—ould Corney, he dies. Thin th' agint from Ennis—an' a cruil scounthril—he managed th' estate. We hated him like Hell, he was harrder than rock, but the Divil keeps his own, an' we cud niver kill him wance annyhow. For, mind ye, down Moher way, we're men, an' 'tis bad to meddle wid us.



"PAY 'T, OR OUT YE GO."

Look ye, sorr, we were poorer than the dead, manny and manny a day we hadn't a taste of mate, only 'taters, an' rotten ones often. Why, the bit acre cudn't kape the life in 's, much less pay the rint. Thin comes th' agint—"Pay the rint," says he. "An' how can we, whin we haven't 't?" says we. "Ye have 't, or if ye haven't 't, y' ought to have 't," says he. "Pay 't, or out ye go," says he.

Ah! what's the good of tellin' y' all this? Haven't ye hearrd it a thousand times? an' did y' iver believe 't? 'Tis God's truth for all that. An', of course, we'd our Sacret Society; where isn't it in Ireland?—an' glad I was to be of 't, an' mebbe ye'd have been that same. We'd our oaths an' our meetin's, an' our long thramps

by night, warrnin' thim that harmed us; an' if they wudn't be warrned—we stopped 'm.

Listen to me, man—sorr, I mane—what ilse cud we do? Wud ye have us lie an' be thrampled on an' stharved, an' we that owned the lan' by rights as our fathers did in th' ould times, hunthreds an' hunthreds of years ago. If we McCauras had our rights wudn't we own the counthry of the Clan Caura, half Munsther 'tis.

An' 'twasn't the landlords we were agin most, sure they were borrn so, an' cud they hilp thimselves? 'Twas agin thim that shud 've been wid us an' bethrayed us. If all the tinants in Ireland stood shouldther to shouldther we'd 've had our rights ages ago. But did they? Warn't there in ivery parish the bodaghs, that for their own comforrt wint agin the Cause, an' tuk th' impty farrms? So we warrned 'm, we frighted 'm, we burrnt their crops, we killed their cattle —we bet 'm, we shot 'm in the legs, an' if that wudn't tache 'm—why we did what had to be done.

"'WE DID WHAT HAD TO BE DONE.'"

Listen to me, man, 'twas no fool's playin' wid us, 'twas life an' death wid us.

What's that ye say? Is't why did we hurrt the cattle? An' did we want to hurrt 'm, the craythurs? Wasn't it the men that owned 'm that we hurrt through 'm?

Years ago now—I disremember how manny, 'twas six I think—Maddigan he comes to Moher. Soon he knew ivery wan, he'd a sootherin' way wid him, an' was allays at the Shebeen. Thin he was shworn into the Society, made believe to be a pathriot, a brave man an' thrue, said he was hidin' from the polis, an' 'twas he shot Scully's agint down 'yond at Cahir. An' said he was a Fenian Centre, an' the night was near, whin in ivery parrish in Ireland the boys wud gather at the Risin' o' the Moon, to sthrike a blow for th' Ould Counthry, an' she be free at last, and we have our right agin.

Proud we were of 'm, an afore the year was out 'twas he was head of iverythin'—ah! but 'twas he was the gran' spaker. He planned iverythin' an' ordered iverythin', we thrusted an' followed him like dogs, an' why not?

Thin in the winther time, says he, "That Healy that lives out ahind Lisdoonvarna yonther, he's a currse to the counthy, wid 's land-grabbin' an' 's spyin'," says he. "By this an' by that he's goin' a dale too far, I'm thinkin', but we'll tache 'm a lesson now. We'll make an example of 'm," says he.

'Tis we were glad enough, we were spoilin' for a job an' not wan of 's liked Healy. Thin says Maddigan, "Healy's a stubborrn dog, an' to fright 'm prroper we'll show 'm how many of 's there are; sorra a one that's here to-night must miss 't; we'll all go, an' 'tis all the betther batin' he'll git if he don't swear th' oath," he says.

So on the Thurrsday we met at the Risin' o' the Moon in the field by the bog ahind Healy's Farrm; near ivery man of 's. There was big Dan Cassidy, of Kilfenora, the biggest man in Clare; there was John Lonergan and Michael Lonergan, of Liscannor, thim that owned th' ould hooker, own brothers they were; Ronan, of Kilfenora, that was Larry Ronan's cousin, an' little Pat O'Brien an' Shaughnessy, of Lahinch, 'twas Pat that kilt Callanan's herd—poor Pat was a dead man that night, God be good to 'm—miles some of 'm came, the bravest boys in the çounthry-side; thin there was Maddigan an' mesilf.

Th' eight of 's were waitin,' an' a bitter shiverin' night 'twas, an wet unther-foot, whin the moon began showin' ahind the Burren hills in a mist, wid a cryin' face on her. An' ivery man of 's had his handkerchief—red wans mostly—tied round his face, an' had a gun. Mind ye, man, we'd no hearrt to kill the craythur, 'twas frightin' 'm we were afther; an' half thim the boys killed, were killed by accident; whose fault was 't if a man was that wake that wan polthogue over the head wid a sthick or a shot in the leg 'd be the death of 'm? A man that wake oughtn't to be let live. Not but that I'm wake enough mesilf now.

His gate was open, an' we crep' up the path to the door one after th' other, no man spakin'. I was last but wan, an' I thought some'at was wrong, 'twas so dead quiet, an' the dog niver barrked. There was a light inside, we saw 't through the chink round the shutther, but 'twas sthrange the shutther was up.

Cassidy, he thumps on the door wid his fist; sorra an answer, he knocks agin.

"Who's there?" cries Healy, "who's there now, annyhow?"

"'Tis the polis," says Cassidy.

"The polis is 't?" says Healy, "an' what d'ye want now at this hour o' the night? Wait a minit, will ye?"

Thin I hearrd shufflin' about inside; he's gethin' out o' bed, thought I. Thin he opens the door a weeshy bit, an' Cassidy he dashes it wide wid his shouldther, an' ivery man of 's we rushes into the house.

"'KNOCKS ON THE DOOR.'"

We weren't in 't afore we hearrd Nolan, the head consthable—he'd a voice clare an' sthrong like a thrumpet—shout, "Surrender in the name o' the Queen!" an' we saw the room full of polis; an' that minit they sprang at us.

"We're thrapped! by God!" cries Cassidy, an' a big consthable was on me.

Niver did ye hear such a scrimmage, thramplin' an' wrastlin', an' smashin' wid butts or sthicks or chairs, or annything we cud lay hould on, but not a shot fired, for divil a bit cud annyone aim at annyone.

An' all the time Mrs. Healy—a little grey woman she is, wid a face like a sthone—she sthands sthill by the scrimmage, holdin' a candle up as high as she cud for us to see to kill wan another by.

I felled wan man an' bruk from another, an' because I was nearest the door I made a bolt for 't, an' was ayond the gate afore ye cud spake. Thin I sthopped to see if I cud hilp the boys anny, though they were done for. All roun' I hearrd whistles, an' polis runnin' up.

An' I crouched at the far side of the wall. Inside the frame o' the door I cud see the room wid ivery wan all in a black lump fightin' like divils, an' the yellow light round 'm an' atween their legs.

Thin two came swingin' an' reelin' out o' the house. 'Twas Cassidy thryin' to git free an' Nolan houldin' 'm—they were gran' men both, mighty an' sthrong. They were grapplin' an' wrastlin' for dear life, sthrugglin' wid naked han's. Nolan had revolvers in 's belt, but he didn't use 'm; perhaps cudn't, or perhaps wanted to fight it fair, man to man.

Cassidy was the sthronger, but Nolan he hild him like grim death—he was a brave man.

They came on sthaggerin' an' swayin' an' shlippin' in the mud unther-foot till they weren't a yarrd from me. Thin they sthopped in a death grip, swingin' roun' an' roun', gaspin' an' sobbin'. They were so locked I cudn't tell which was which, but whin the light caught Nolan's revolvers. Thin of a sudden wan—'twas Nolan—was done; he shlipped, and Cassidy heaved 'm clane off 's feet an' thin swang 'm down, hurrled 'm down, smashin' 's head agin the sthone wall.

I hearrd his head smash, it sounded like a broken keg, it made me blood cold.

Nolan, he makes wan shrug to git up. "Holy Mother o' God!" he cries, in a wake child's whisper, thin he falls flat, like a log.

Ay, his head sounded like a broken keg, it made me hearrt sick.

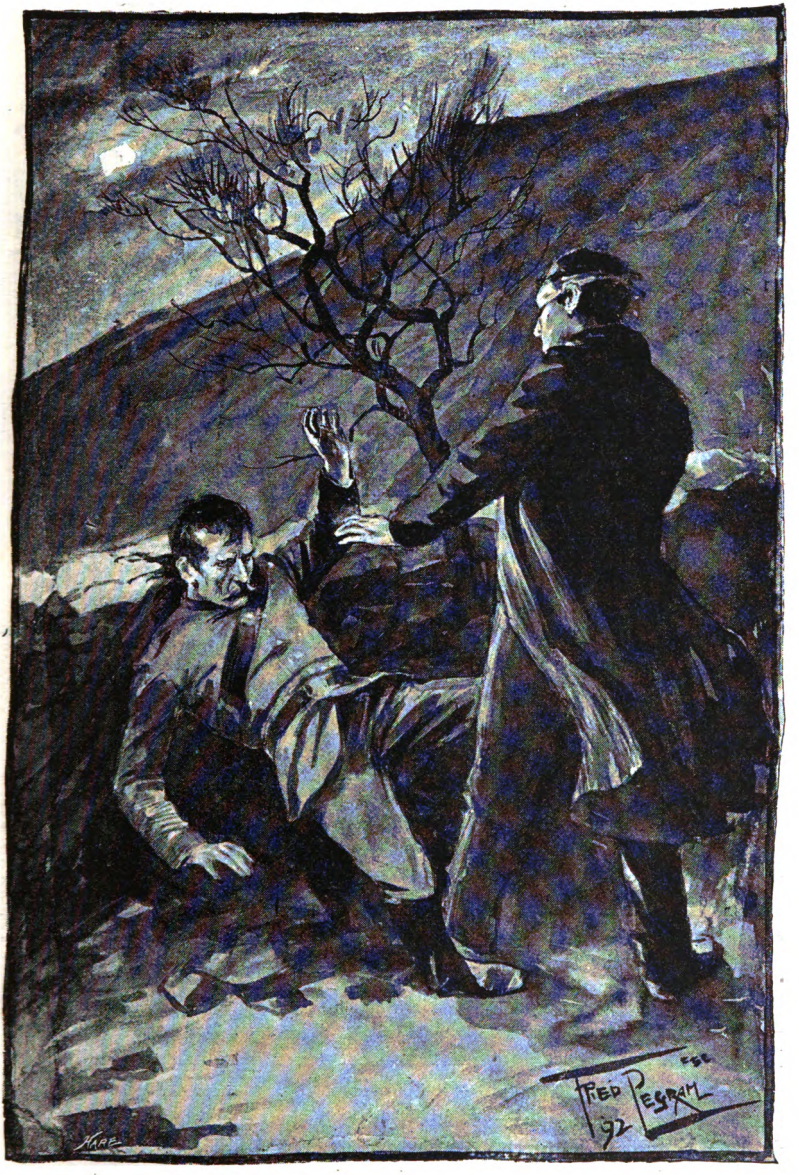
Did y' iver hear tell how we shmuggled kegs o' potheen by the Cliffs o' Moher—'twas brought by hookers acrass the bay from Connemara, the polis niver caught 's though they ran 's harrd. Wance whin Father Doherty, of Corrofin, was a sthranger thereabouts—an' a fine upsthandin' man he is, wid a kind hearrt of 's own, God bless 'm—he comes up the rocks to our Shebeen, an' he asks for a sup. Sure we gave 't to 'm wid a hearrt an' a half—for whin did a soggarth bethray us? "Thin," says he, sudden, "so I have ye at last, me fine boys. I'm no priest," says he, "I'm an Inspecthor in disguise," says he. 'Twas only his joke, ye know, but faith 'twas near bein' a wry joke for him—for a thraneen we'd 've thrown 'm over the cliff; we were mad wid 'm for thrappin' 's at last by sich a coward's thrick. He laughed on th' other side of 's face whin he saw what we were afther, an' turrned whiter than whitewash. "For God's sake be aisy, boys! don't ye see it's jokin' I am," says he.

But that's neither here nor there.

What's that ye say, sorr? About Healy's Farrm?

Nolan he lay sthill as a sthone, the life was out of 'm. Cassidy niver looked twice at 'm, an' was past me like a flash. I was off, too, acrass the bog, lightnin' was slow to me, till I sat by Larry Ronan's hearrth. He's a soft man is Larry, that has no stomach for fightin', but he was game to swear that I spint the night wid him, thin how cud the polis harrm me?

Next mornin', puttin' a bould face on it, I wint into Lisdoonvarna to see the poor boys marrched off. Wan by wan they came by, ivery man of 'm (barrin' Cassidy, and me, and poor Pat that was lyin' dead in the farrm, God rest his soul!) wid the darrbies on, an' aich wid two polis to kape 'm, an' the mounted polis ridin'



"'SMASHIN' 'S HEAD AGIN THE STHONE WALL.'"

afore an' ahind. It wanted an arrmy to hould 'm. They walked wid proud faces an' a laughin' worrd for the folk, and 'twas manny that ran out an' grasped 'm by the hand.

Maddigan was wid 'm, but whin I saw 'm I knew 't all—he looked no man in the face, he was 'fraid o' the crrowd, an' why was he that? Ye see, man, 'twas a thrap, a currsed thrap the whole thing. Maddigan he was a thraitor, he niver shot a man in 's life, the coward! He was no pathriot, but an inforrmer, an' all the time he was foolin' 's. May black disthruction rot 'm! God forrgive me for sayin' 't, I mane may God give 'm what he desarves!

"'HE LOOKED NO MAN IN THE FACE.'"

I'd have kilt 'm thin if I'd had the chance; but he was safe from me—there was no reachin' 'm. But 'twas all up wid me if he played inforrmer, for if wance the polis have hould o' ye 'tis harrd but they hang ye somehow, though 'tis for murtherin' the wrong man, wan ye niver laid eyes on, much less a finger.

So afore the week was out I was here in London. An' that's why I lift Moher, an' bitterly I rued 't; manny's the hearrt-scaldin' I've had of 't.

Ah! what wudn't I give to smell the sea agin, an' be fishin' in me corracle out unther the cliffs wid the rollers rockin' me, an' feel the fish flutherin'; or sthandin' out to th' open sea in Lonergan's ould hooker, an' she shiverin' unther ye an' slidtherin' over the wather wid her mast creakin', and wid the wather sparrklin' like fish an' purrin' roun' her bows as if 'twas glad to feel th' ould boat on 't agin, an' th' islands on the right o' ye —Innismaan, Innishere an' Arranmore—an' the Connemara Mountains lyin' far ahind 'm like ghosts of mountains.

Six years I've lived here a bricklayer, out of worrk often, shamed o' me own name, 'fraid o' me own shadow, wid niver a fren' in the worrld but the dhrink—the currsed dhrink!

Ah, no! Why shud I currse 't? whin I was a sthrong man I currsed 't—whin I wasn't hungerin' for 't, dyin' for th' smell of 't,

the warrmth of 't, th' strength of 't, the tingle of 't on me tongue. 'T has been the ruin o' me, 't has brought me here, 'tis the death o' me now. But 't has been me fren', light in the darrkness to me. What ilse cud cheer ye whin the taters are black in the sodden bit acre, an' the rain splashes for days long wid niver a hush, an' the wind from the sea rattles yer door, howlin' like a damned soul, chokin' the shmoke down the chimney-hole till yer cabin is blind wid 't, dhrivin' the rain through the chinks o' the door, an' the crannies o' the wall where the plasther 's fallen, an' the leaks o' the roof where the thatch 's rotten, till the floor turrns to mud unther yer feet, an' ye sit wid niver a light to burrn, niver a morrsel t' ate, alone in yer misery. What ilse cud brighten ye, be food an' warrmth till ye forgit the throuble ahind an' afore ye, an' see nothin' but hope, an' wudn't change your bit cabin for Castle Desmond itsilf ? "

By this time his voice was faint; when his face was towards the wall I could scarcely hear him. The room was getting darker, the twilight showed only his big square hands, they looked white in the dusk. After a long pause he went on again, talking of Moher and Castle Desmond, of Father Flannery and "Miss Aileen," names familiar to me. He kept speaking of his moonlighting deeds, and rather with pride than with repentance; he seemed kindly-natured enough, a man with a love of his country and his own folk, yet could see nothing shameful in murder or in maiming cattle.

But the air of the room was sickening, and I was tired of balancing myself on that ricketty chair, so I got up to leave him.

Was there anything I could do for him or get for him ?

"No, thankin' ye kindly, sorr. 'Tis all the same now. All I want is fresh air, an' that ye can't give me in this hell. May ye niver know what 't is to be stharvin' for a glimpse of clane sky, sthranglin' for fresh air."

Out of doors it was nearly dark. Over the opposite house a flushed moon was rising "in a mist wid a cryin' face on her."

Because it was Saturday night the slum was noisy and thronged. A barrel-organ in the next street was grinding out "The Wearin' o' the Green," and the refrain rang in my head—

> "They are hangin' men and women
> For the Wearin' o' the Green."

As I passed I saw an old Irish crossing-sweep, a man very poor and disreputable, give the organ-grinder a penny. And when I went that way next morning, I found McCaura had left Paradise Walk in search of another Paradise.

Told by the Colonel.

VI.

A CLERICAL ROMANCE.

By W. L. Alden.

Illustrations by Hal Hurst.

"IF you want to know my opinion of women preachers," said the Colonel, "I can give it to you straight. They draw well at first, but you can't depend upon them for a run. I have had considerable experience of them, and at one time I thought well of them, but a woman I think is out of place in the pulpit.

"Although I never was a full member of the New Berlinopolisville Methodist church, I was treated as a sort of honorary member, partly because I subscribed pretty largely to the pastor's salary, the annual picnics, and that sort of thing, and partly because the deacons, knowing that I had some little reputation as a theatrical manager, and was a man of from fair to middling judgment, used to consult me quietly about the management of the church. There was a large Baptist church in the same town, and its opposition was a little too much for us. The Baptist house was crowded every Sunday, while ours was thin and discouraging. We had a good old gentleman for a minister, but he was over seventy, and a married man besides, which kept the women from taking much interest in him; while his old-fashioned notions didn't suit the young men of the congregation. The Baptists, on the other hand, had a young unmarried preacher, with a voice that you could hear a quarter of a mile off, and a way of giving it to the Jews, and the Mormons, and other safe and distant sinners, that filled his hearers with enthusiasm, and offended nobody. It was growing more and more evident every day that our establishment was going behindhand, and that something must be done unless we were willing to close our doors and go into bankruptcy, and one day the whole board of trustees and all the deacons came round to talk the matter over with me.

"My mind was already made up, and I was only waiting to have my advice asked before giving it. 'What we want,' said I, 'is

a woman preacher. She'll be a sensation that will take the wind out of that Baptist windmill, and if she is good-looking, which she has got to be, I will bet you—that is, I am prepared to say—that within a fortnight there will be standing room only in the old Methodist church.'

"'But what are we to do with Dr. Brewster?' asked one of the deacons. 'He has been preaching to us now for forty years, and it don't seem quite the square thing to turn him adrift.'

"'Oh! that's all right,' said I. 'We'll retire him on a pension, and he'll be glad enough to take it. As for your woman preacher, I've got just what you want. At least, I know where she is, and how much we'll have to pay to get her. She'll come fast enough for the same salary that we are paying Dr. Brewster, and if she doesn't double the value of your pew-rents in six months, I will make up the deficit myself.'

"THE REV. MATILDA MARSH."

"The trustees were willing to take my advice, and in the course of a few days Dr. Brewster had been retired on half-pay, the church had extended a call to the Rev. Matilda Marsh, and the reverend girl, finding that the salary was satisfactory, accepted it.

"She was only about twenty-five years old, and as pretty as a picture when she stood in the pulpit in her black silk dress with a narrow white collar, something like the sort of thing that your clergymen wear. I couldn't help feeling sad when I first saw her, to think that she did not go into the variety business, or a circus, where she would have made her fortune and the fortune of any intelligent manager. As a dance and song artiste, she would have been worth a good six hundred dollars a week. But women are always wasting their talents, when they have any, and doing exactly what Nature didn't mean them to do.

"Miss Marsh was a success from the moment that she came among us. Being both unmarried and pretty, she naturally fetched the young men, and as she let it be understood that she believed in the celibacy of the clergy, and never intended to marry under any circumstances, the greater part of the women were willing to forgive her good looks. Then she could preach a first-class sermon, and I call myself a judge of sermons, for at one time I managed an agency for supplying preachers with ready-made sermons, and I never put a single one on the market that I hadn't read myself. I don't mean to say that Miss Marsh was strong on doctrinal sermons, but everyone knows that the public doesn't want doctrinal sermons. What it wants is poetry and pathos, and Miss Marsh used to ladle them out as if she had been born and bred an undertaker's poet.

"OR A CIRCUS."

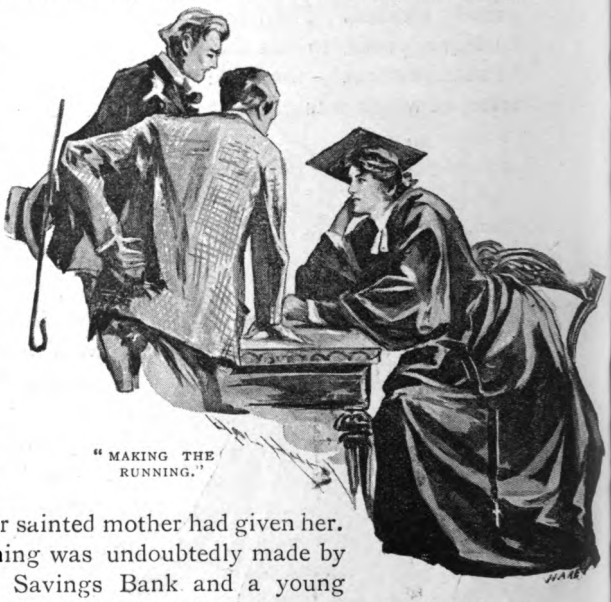
"As I had prophesied, the Baptists couldn't stand the competition when we opened with our woman preacher. Their minister took to going to the gymnasium to expand his chest, and by that means increased his lung power until he could be heard almost twice as far as formerly, but it didn't do any good. His congregation thinned out week by week, and while our church was crowded, his pew-rents fell below what was necessary to pay his salary, not to speak of the other incidental expenses. A few of the young men continued to stick by him until our minister began her series of sermons 'To Young Men Only,' and that brought them in. I had the sermons advertised with big coloured posters, and they proved to be the most attractive thing ever offered to the religious public. The church was crammed with young men, while lots of men of from fifty to seventy years old joined the Young Men's Christian Association, as soon as they heard of the course of sermons, and by that means managed to get admission to hear them. Miss Marsh preached to young men on

the vices of the day, such as drinking, and card-playing, and dancing, and going to the theatre, and she urged them to give up these dissipations, and cultivate their minds. Some of them started a Browning Club that for a time was very popular. Every time the club met one of Browning's poems would be selected by the president, and each member who put up a dollar was allowed to guess its meaning. The man who made the best guess took all the money, and sometimes there was as much as thirty dollars in the pool. The young men told Miss Marsh that they had given up poker, and gone in for Browning, and, of course, she was greatly pleased. Then some of the older men started a Milton Club, and used to cut for drinks by putting a knife-blade into 'Paradise Lost'—the man who made it open at a page, the first letter of which was nearer to the head of the alphabet than any letter cut by any other man, winning the game. Under Miss Marsh's influence a good many other schemes for mental cultivation were invented and put into operation, and everybody said that that noble young woman was doing an incalculable amount of good.

"SHE WOULDN'T LISTEN."

"As a matter of course, at least half the young men of the congregation fell in love with the girl preacher. They found it very difficult to make any progress in courting her, for she wouldn't listen to any conversation on the subject. When Christmas came, the question what to give her kept the young men awake night after night. The women had an easy job, for they could give the preacher clothes, and lace, and hairpins, and such, which the young men knew that they could not give without taking a liberty. If she had been a man, slippers would, of course, have been the correct thing, but the young men felt that they couldn't work slippers for a girl that always wore buttoned boots, and that if they did venture upon such a thing the chances were that she would feel

herself insulted. One chap thought of working on the front of an underskirt—if that is the right name of it—I mean one of those petticoats that are built for show rather than use—the words, 'Bless our Pastor,' in yellow floss silk, but when he asked his sister to lend him one of her skirts as a model, she told him that he was the champion fool of the county. You may ask, why didn't the preacher's admirers give her jewellery? For the reason that she never wore anything of the kind except a pair of earrings that her mother had given her, and which she had promised always to wear. They represented chestnut burs, and it is clear to my mind that her mother knew that no young man who had much regard for his eyesight would come very near a girl defended by that sort of earring. Miss Marsh used to say that other people could wear what they thought right, but she felt it to be inconsistent with her holy calling to wear any jewellery except the earrings that her sainted mother had given her.



"MAKING THE RUNNING."

"The best running was undoubtedly made by the cashier of the Savings Bank and a young lawyer. Not that either of them had any real encouragement from Miss Marsh, but she certainly preferred them to the rest of the field, and was on what was certainly entitled to be called friendly terms with both of them. Of the two the cashier was by far the most devoted. He was ready to do anything that might give him a chance of winning. He even wanted to take a class in the Sunday-school, but the bank directors forbade it. They said it would impair the confidence of the public in the bank, and would be pretty sure to bring about a run which the bank might not be able to stand. They consented, however, that he should become the president of the new temperance society which the Rev. Miss Marsh had started, as the president had the right to buy wines and

liquors at wholesale in order to have them analysed, and thus show how poisonous they were. As the cashier offered to stand in with the bank directors and let them fill their cellars at wholesale rates, both he and the directors made a good thing of it.

"The other young man, the lawyer, was a different sort of chap. He was one of those fellows that begin to court a girl by knocking her down with a club. I don't mean to say that he ever actually knocked a woman down, but his manner towards women was that of a superior being, instead of a slave, and I am bound to say that as a general thing the women seemed to like it. He wasn't a handsome man like the cashier, but he had a big yellow beard that any sensible girl would have held to be worth twice the smooth-shaved cheek of his rival. He never tried to join the Sunday-school, nor the temperance society, nor to do anything else of the kind to curry favour with the minister, but he used occasionally to give her good advice, and to tell her that this or that thing which she was doing was a mistake. Indeed, he didn't hesitate to tell her that she had no business in the pulpit, and had better go out as a governess, or a circus rider, and so conform to the dictates of Nature.

"I used to watch the game pretty closely, because I had staked my professional reputation on the financial success of the girl-preacher, and I didn't want her to marry, and so put an end to her attractiveness with the general public. I didn't really think that there was much danger of any such thing, for Miss Marsh seemed to be entirely absorbed in her work, and her salary was exceptionally large. Still you can never tell when a woman will break the very best engagement, and that is one reason why they will never succeed as preachers. You pay a man a good salary, and he will never find that Providence calls him elsewhere, unless, of course, he has a very much better offer; but a woman preacher is capable of throwing up a first-class salary because she don't like the colour of a deacon's hair, or because the upholstery of the pulpit doesn't match with her complexion.

"That winter we had a very heavy fall of snow, and after that the sleighing was magnificent for the next month or two. The cashier made the most of it by taking the minister out sleigh-riding two or three times a week. The lawyer did not seem to care anything about it, even when he saw the minister whirling along the road behind the best pair of horses in the town, with the cashier by her side, and her lap full of caramels. But one Saturday afternoon, when he knew that the cashier would be detained at the bank until very late—the president having just skipped to

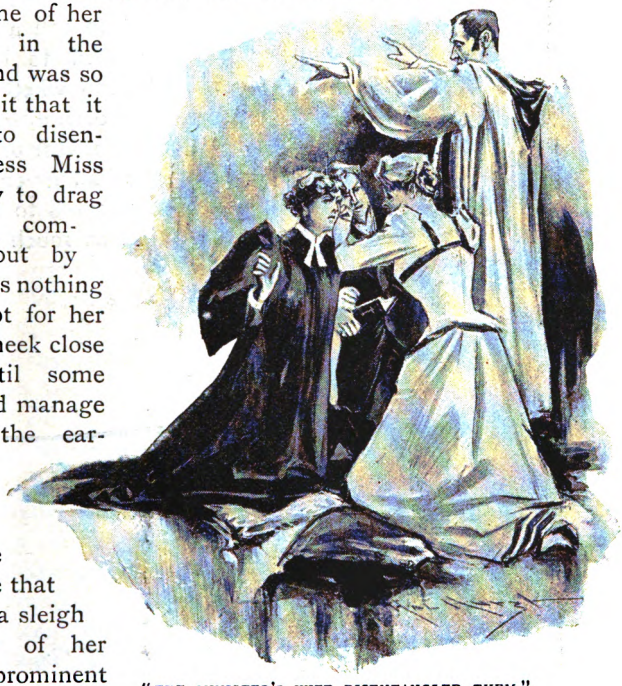
Canada, and it being necessary to ascertain the amount of the deficit without delay—the lawyer hired a sleigh and called for the minister. Although she was preparing her next day's sermon by committing to memory a lot of Shelley's poetry, she dropped

"CALLED FOR THE MINISTER."

Shelley, and had on her best hat and was wrapped in the buffalo robe by the side of the lawyer in less than half an hour after she had told him that she positively wouldn't keep him waiting three minutes.

"You remember what I said about the peculiar pattern of her

earrings. It is through those earrings that the Methodist church lost its minister, and I became convinced that a female ministry is not a good thing to tie to. Miss Marsh and her admirer were driving quietly along and enjoying themselves in a perfectly respectable way, when one runner of the sleigh went over a good-sized log that had dropped from somebody's load of wood, and had been left in the road. The sleigh didn't quite upset, but Miss Marsh was thrown against the lawyer with a shock for which she apologised, and he thanked her. But it happened that one of her earrings caught in the lawyer's beard, and was so twisted up with it that it was impossible to disentangle it. Unless Miss Marsh was ready to drag about half her companion's beard out by the roots there was nothing to be done except for her to sit with her cheek close against his until some third person could manage to disentangle the earring. While she was in this painful position—at least she said at the time that it was painful—a sleigh containing two of her deacons and a prominent Baptist drove by. Miss Marsh saw them, and saw the horrified expression on their faces. She knew quick enough that her usefulness as a minister in New Berlinopolisville was at an end, and that there was going to be a terrible scandal. So, being a woman, she burst into tears, and said that she wished she was dead.

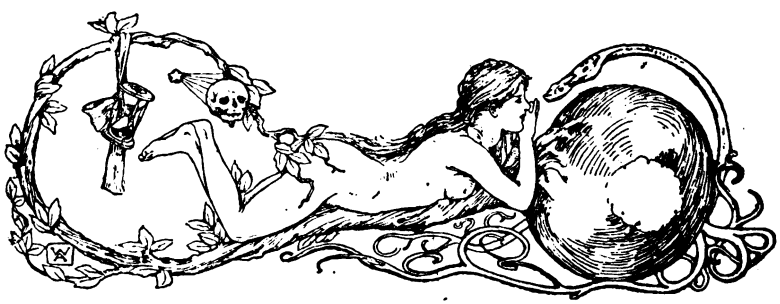


"THE MINISTER'S WIFE DISENTANGLED THEM."

"But the lawyer was equal to the occasion. He told her that there was nothing left to be done except for them to be married and disentangled at the next town. Then he would take her on a long wedding trip, stopping at Chicago to buy some clothes, and that

if she so wished they would afterwards settle in some other town, instead of coming back to New Berlinopolisville. Of course, she said that the proposal was not to be thought of for a moment, and of course she accepted it within the next ten minutes. They drove to the house of the nearest minister, and the minister's wife disentangled them to save time, while the minister was engaged in marrying them.

"That was the end of the experiment of playing a woman preacher on the boards of the First Methodist church of Berlinopolisville. Everybody was content to call a man in the place of Miss Marsh, and everybody agreed to blame me for the failure of the experiment. I don't know whether the lawyer ever had any reason to regret his marriage or not, but when I saw his wife at a fancy dress ball at Chicago a year or two later, I could see that she was not sorry that she had given up the ministry. Ever since that time I have been opposed to women preachers, and consider a woman in the pulpit as much out of place as a deacon in the ballet."



The American Claimant.

By MARK TWAIN.

Illustrations by Hal Hurst.

CHAPTER XVII.

MEANTIME the earl and Hawkins were holding a troubled and anxious private consultation. The earl said—

"The mystery that bothers me is, where did it get its other arm?"

"Don't you think maybe we've waked up the wrong one?"

"How do you account for the clothes?"

"The clothes *are* right, there's no getting around it. What are we going to do? We can't collect, as I see. The reward is for a one-armed American. This is a two-armed Englishman."

"Well, it maybe that that is not objectionable. You see it isn't *less* than is called for; it is *more*, and so——"

But he saw that this argument was weak, and dropped it. Finally the earl's face began to glow with an inspiration, and he said, impressively—

"Hawkins, this materialization is a grander and nobler science than we have dreamed of. *Every man is made up of heredities*, long-descended atoms and particles of his ancestors. This present materialization is incomplete. We have only brought it down to the beginning of this century."

"What do you mean, Colonel!"

The Colonel brought his fist down with emphasis.

"I mean exactly this. We've materialized this burglar's ancestor!"

He rose and walked the floor in great excitement. Hawkins said plaintively—

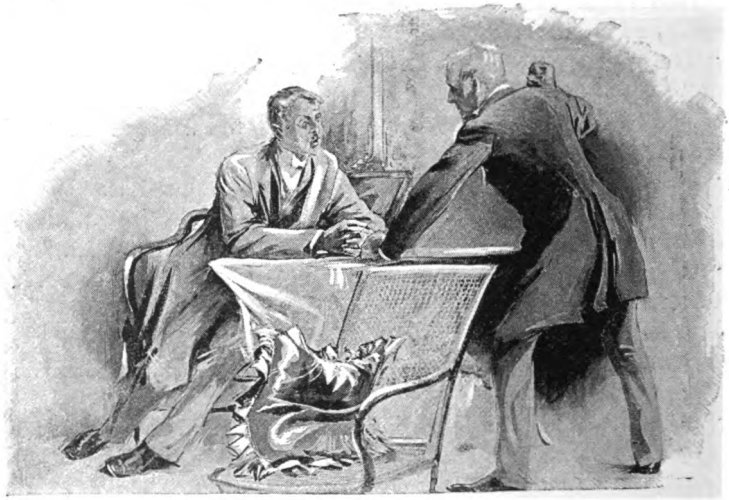
"It's a bitter disappointment—bitter."

"I know it. I know it, Senator. But we've got to submit—on moral grounds. I need money, but God knows I am not poor enough or shabby enough to be an accessory to the punishing

of a man's ancestor for crime committed by that ancestor's posterity."

"But, Colonel!" implored Hawkins; "stop and think; don't be rash; you know it's the only chance we've got to get the money, and besides, the Bible itself says posterity to the fourth generation shall be punished for the sins and crimes committed by ancestors four generations back that hadn't anything to do with them; and so it's only fair to turn the rule around and make it work both ways. I'd give him up if he was a thousand ancestors compacked into one."

"Lord bless me, that's just what he is," said Sellers; "there's a contribution in him from every ancestor he ever had. In him there's atoms of priests, soldiers, crusaders, poets, and sweet and



"'WE'VE MATERIALIZED THIS BURGLAR'S ANCESTOR!'"

gracious women, all kinds and conditions of folk who trod this earth in old, old centuries, and vanished out of it ages ago, and now by act of ours they are summoned from their holy peace to answer for gutting a one-horse bank away out on the borders of Cherokee Strip, and it's just a howling outrage!"

"Oh, don't talk like that, Colonel; it takes the heart all out of me, and makes me ashamed of the part I am proposing to——"

"Wait, I've got it!"

"A saving hope? Shout it out, I am perishing."

"It's perfectly simple; a child would have thought of it. He

is all right, not a flaw in him, as far as I have carried the work. If I've been able to bring him as far as the beginning of this century, what's to stop me now? I'll go on and materialize him down to date."

"Lord, I never thought of that," said Hawkins, all ablaze with joy again. "And will he shed the superfluous arm?"

"He will."

"And lose his English accent?"

"It will wholly disappear. He will speak Cherokee Strip—and other forms of profanity."

"Colonel, maybe he'll confess!"

"Hawkins, he will be wholly under my command. I will make him confess every crime he ever committed. There must be a thousand. Do you get the idea?"

"Well—not quite."

"The rewards will come to us."

"Prodigious conception! I *never* saw such a head for seeing with a lightning glance all the outlying ramifications and possibilities of a central idea."

"It is nothing; it comes natural to me. When his time is out in one jail he goes to the next and the next, and we shall have nothing to do but collect the rewards as he goes along. I do not hesitate to say that I consider this one of the most valuable properties I have ever controlled."

"Oh, Colonel, the wasting grind and grief of poverty! If we could realize immediately. I don't mean sell it all, but sell part—enough, you know, to——"

"'IF WE COULD REALIZE IMMEDIATELY.'"

"Your idea is to sell a part of him for ready cash. Now mine is—guess."

"I haven't an idea. What is it?"

"Stock him, of course."

"Well, I should never have thought of that."

"Because you are not a financier. Say he has committed a

thousand crimes. Certainly that's a low estimate. By the look of him, even in his unfinished condition, he has committed all of a million. But call it only a thousand to be perfectly safe; five thousand reward, multiplied by a thousand, gives us a dead sure cash basis of—what? Five million dollars!"

"You daze me; you make my head whirl!"

"Let it whirl, it won't do it any harm. Now that matter is all fixed—leave it alone. I'll get up the company and issue the stock all in good time. I judge you don't doubt my ability to work it up for all it is worth."

"Indeed I don't. I can say that with truth."

"All right, then. That's disposed of. Everything in its turn. We old operators go by order and system—no helter-skelter business with us. What's the next thing on the docket? The carrying on of the materialization—the bringing it down to date. I will begin on that at once. I think——"

"Look here, Rossmore. You didn't lock it in. A hundred to one it has escaped!"

"Calm yourself as to that; don't give yourself any uneasiness."

"But why shouldn't it escape?"

"Let it, if it wants to. What of it?"

"Well, I should consider it a pretty serious calamity."

"Why, my dear boy, once in my power, always in my power. It may go and come freely. I can produce it here whenever I want it, just by the exercise of my will."

"Well, I am truly glad to hear that, I do assure you."

"Yes, I shall give it all the painting it wants to do, and we and the family will make it as comfortable and contented as we can. No occasion to restrain its movements. I hope to persuade it to remain pretty quiet, though, because a materialization which is in a state of arrested development must of necessity be pretty soft and flabby and substanceless, and—er—by the way, I wonder where it comes from?"

"How? What do you mean?"

The earl pointed significantly—and interrogatively—toward the sky. Hawkins started; then settled into deep reflection; finally shook his head sorrowfully, and pointed downwards.

"What makes you think so, Washington?"

"Well, I hardly know, but really, you can see yourself that he doesn't seem to be pining for his last place."

"It's well thought. Soundly deduced. We've done that thing a favor. But I believe I will pump it a little, in a quiet way, and find out if we are right."

CHAPTER XVIII.

TRACY made slow progress with his work. Many things were puzzling him. Finally a light burst upon him, and he said to himself, "I've got the clue at last—this man's mind is off its balance. These dreadful chromos—which he takes for old masters; the pompous name of this ramshackle old crib—Rossmore Towers; and that odd assertion of his, that I was expected. How could I—that is, Lord Berkeley—be expected. He knows by the papers that person was burned up in the New Gadsby. Why, hang it, he really doesn't know *who* he was expecting; for his talk showed that he was not expecting an Englishman, or yet an artist, yet I answer his requirements notwithstanding. Yes, he is a little off. But he's interesting—all people in about his condition are, I suppose. I would like to come every day and study him. Somebody coming. It's the old gentleman again. I wonder what he's making those passes in the air for, with his hands. Can he be trying to mesmerize me?"

The Colonel muttered to himself, "It has an effect on him—I can see it myself. That's enough for one time, I reckon. He's not very solid yet, I suppose, and I might disintegrate him. I'll just put a sly question or two at him now, and see if I can find out what his condition is, and where he's from."

The Colonel asked a number of questions which seemed pretty odd and flighty to Tracy; but the answers conveyed the information desired apparently, for the Colonel said to himself with mixed pride and gratification—

"It's a good job as far as I've got with it. He's solid—solid and going to last. It's wonderful—wonderful. I believe I could petrify him."

After a little he asked, warily—

"Do you prefer being here, or—or there?"

"There? Where?"

"Why—er—where you've been?"

Tracy's thoughts flew to his boarding-house, and he answered with decision—

"Oh, *here*, much!"

The Colonel was startled, and said to himself, "There's no uncertain ring about that. It indicates where *he's* been to, poor fellow. Well, I am satisfied now. I'm glad I got him out."

Sally Sellers entered from the street, now, looking her divinest, and the artist was introduced to her. It was a violent

"LOOKING HER DIVINEST."

case of mutual love at first sight, though neither party was aware of the fact. The Englishman made this irrelevant remark to himself, "Perhaps he is not insane after all." Sally sat down, and showed an interest in Tracy's work which greatly pleased him, and a benevolent forgiveness of it which convinced him that the girl's nature was cast in a large mould. Sellers was anxious to report his discoveries to Hawkins; so he took his leave, saying that if the two "young devotees of the coloured muse" thought they could manage without him he would go and look after his affairs.

Of course the stranger was very soon at his ease, and chatting along comfortably. The average American girl possesses the valuable qualities of naturalness, honesty, and inoffensive straightforwardness; she is nearly barren of troublesome conventions and artificialities, consequently her presence and her ways are unembarrassing, and one is acquainted with her and on pleasant terms with her before he knows how it came about. This new acquaintanceship progressed swiftly. Gwendolen invited the artist to stay to dinner. He had to decline, because he wanted to live, now—that is, now that there was something to live for—and he could not survive in those clothes at a gentleman's table. But he went away happy, for he saw that Gwendolen was disappointed.

And whither did he go? He went straight to a slop-shop and bought as neat and reasonably well-fitting a suit of clothes as an Englishman could be persuaded to wear.

The old people were troubled about Gwendolen at dinner, because she was so distraught and silent. If they had noticed, they would have found that she was sufficiently alert and interesting whenever the talk stumbled upon the artist and his work; but they didn't notice, and so the chat would swap around to some other subject, and then somebody would presently be privately worrying about Gwendolen again and wondering if she were not well, or if something had gone wrong in the millinery line. At bedtime, when the family were breaking up for the night, she privately looted one of the brushes, saying to herself, "It's the one he has used the most."

The next morning Tracy went forth wearing his new suit, and equipped with a pink in his buttonhole—a daily attention from Puss. His whole soul was full of Gwendolen Sellers, and this condition was an inspiration art-wise. All the morning his brush pawed nimbly away at the canvasses, almost without his awarity—

awarity in this sense being the sense of being aware, though disputed by some authorities—turning out marvel upon marvel, in the way of decorative accessories to the portraits, with a felicity and celerity which amazed the veterans of the firm, and fetched out of them continuous explosions of applause.

Meantime Gwendolen was losing her morning, and many dollars. She supposed Tracy was coming in the forenoon. So she tripped downstairs every little while from her work-parlor to arrange the brushes and things over again, and see if he had arrived. After luncheon she waited again. A whole hour. Then a great joy welled up in her heart, for she saw him coming. So she flew back upstairs thankful, and could hardly wait for him to miss the principal brush, which she had mislaid down there, but knew where she had mislaid it. However, all in good time the others were called in and couldn't find the brush, and then she was sent for, and she couldn't find it herself for some little time, but then she found it when the others had gone away to hunt in the kitchen and down cellar and in the woodshed, and all those other places where people look for things whose ways they are not familiar with. So she gave him the brush, and remarked that she ought to have seen that everything was ready for him, but it hadn't seemed necessary, because it was so early that she wasn't expecting—but she stopped there, surprised at herself for what she was saying; and he felt caught and ashamed, and said to himself, "I knew my impatience would drag me here before I was expected, and betray me, and that is just what it has done; she sees straight through me—and is laughing at me."

"LOOTED ONE OF THE BRUSHES."

Gwendolen was very much pleased on one account, and a little the other way in another; pleased with the new clothes and the improvement which they had achieved; less pleased by the pink in the buttonhole. She wished she could think of some way of

getting at its history in a properly colorless and indifferent way. Presently she made a venture. She said:

"Whatever a man's age may be, he can reduce it several years

"'SHE'S LAUGHING AT ME!'"

by putting a bright-colored flower in his buttonhole. I have often noticed that. Is that your sex's reason for wearing a *boutonnière?*"

"I fancy not, but certainly that reason would be a sufficient one. I've never heard of the idea before."

"You seem to prefer pinks. Is it on account of the color, or the form?"

"Oh, no," he said, simply, "they are given to me. I don't think I have any preference."

"They are given to him," she said to herself, and she felt a coldness towards that pink. "I wonder if he cares for her." That thought gave her a quite definite pain.

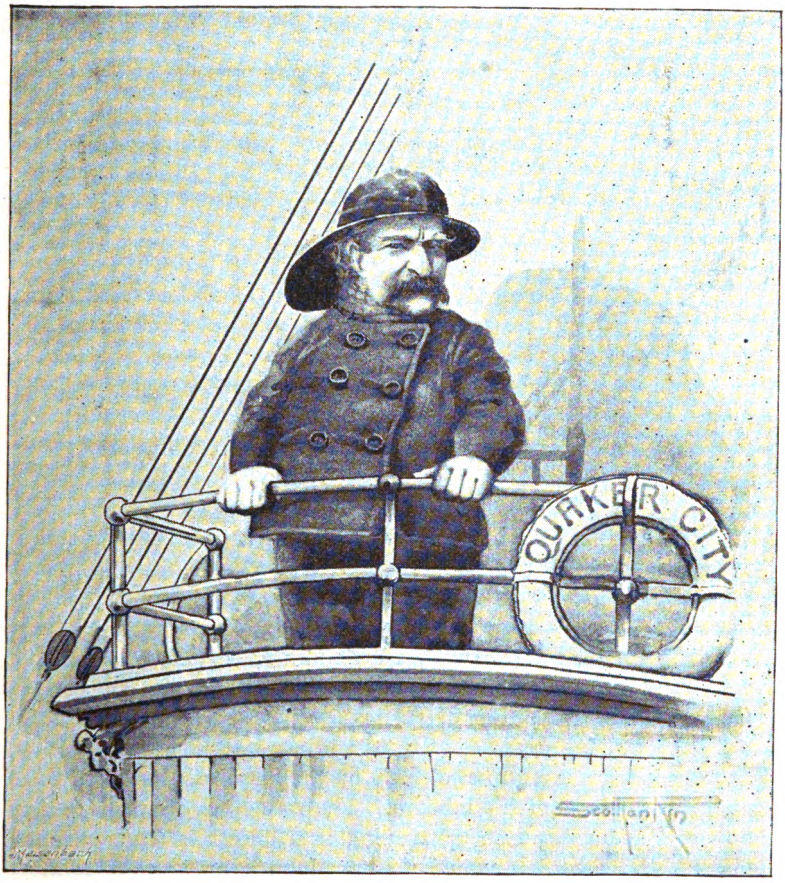
(To be continued.)

A GOOSE QUILL DRIVER.

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

MARK TWAIN.



"'D-e-e-p four!'

* * * *

'M-a-r-k three! . . . M-a r-k three . . .
Quarter less three! . . . . Half twain!'

* * * *

'Quarter twain! Quarter twain! *Mark* twain!'"

"Life on the Mississippi."

Jerome tells an anecdote about a good Bishop.

Well, speaking of anecdotes, one of the best I ever heard was told me by a journalistic friend of mine. It was about a Bishop: most anecdotes are. One Sunday evening this Bishop had to preach a sermon at St. Paul's Cathedral. The occasion was a very special and important one, and every God-fearing newspaper in the kingdom sent its own special representative to report the proceedings. Now, of these three reporters thus commissioned, one was a man of appearance so eminently respectable that no one would have thought of taking him for a journalist. People used to put him down for a County Councillor or an Archdeacon at the very least. As a matter of fact, however, he was a sinful man, with a passion for gin. He lived at Bow, and, on the Sabbath in question, he left his home at five o'clock in the afternoon, and started to walk to the scene of his labours. The road from Bow to the City on a wet and chilly Sunday evening is a cheerless one; who can blame him if on his way he stopped once or twice to comfort himself with "two" of his favourite beverage? On reaching St. Paul's he found he had twenty minutes to spare—just time enough for one final "nip." Half way down a narrow court leading out of the Churchyard, he found a quiet little hostelry, and, entering the private bar, whispered insinuatingly across the counter: "Two of gin, hot, if you please, my dear." His voice had the self-satisfied meekness of the successful ecclesiastic, his bearing suggested rectitude tempered by desire to avoid observation. The

barmaid, impressed by his manner and appearance, drew the attention of the landlord to him. The landlord covertly took stock of so much of him as could be seen between his buttoned-up coat and his drawn-down hat, and wondered how so bland and innocent-looking a gentleman came to know of gin. A landlord's duty, however, is not to wonder, but to serve. The gin was given to the man and the man drank it. He liked it. It was good gin; he was a connoisseur and he knew. Indeed, so good did it seem to him that he felt it would be a waste of opportunity not to have another twopen'orth. Therefore he had a second "go"; maybe a third. Then he returned to the Cathedral, and sat himself down with his notebook on his knee and waited.

* * * *

And a sinful reporter.

As the service proceeded there stole over him that spirit of indifference to all earthly surroundings that religion and drink are alone able to bestow. He heard the good Bishop's text and wrote it down. Then he heard the Bishop's "sixthly and lastly," and took that down, and looked at his notebook and wondered in a peaceful way what had become of the "firstly" to "fifthly" inclusive. He sat there wondering until the people round him began to get up and move away, whereupon it struck him swiftly and suddenly that he had been asleep, and had thereby escaped the main body of the discourse. What on earth was he to do? He was representing one of the leading religious papers. A full report of the sermon was wanted that very night. Seizing the robe of a passing wandsman, he tremulously inquired if the Bishop had yet left the Cathedral. The wandsman answered that he had not, but that he was just on the point of doing so. "I must see him before he goes!" exclaimed the reporter, excitedly. "You can't," replied the wandsman. The journalist grew frantic. "Tell him," he cried, "a penitent sinner desires to speak with him about the sermon he has just delivered. To-morrow it will be too late." The wandsman was touched, so was the Bishop. He said he would see the poor fellow. As soon as the door was shut the man, with tears in his eyes, told the Bishop the truth—leaving out the gin. He said that he was a poor man, and not in good health, that he had been up half the night before, and had walked all the way from Bow that evening. He dwelt on the disastrous results to himself and his family should he fail to obtain a report of the sermon. The Bishop felt sorry for the man. Also, he was anxious that his

sermon should be reported. "Well, I trust it will be a warning to you against going to sleep in church," he said, with an indulgent smile. "Luckily, I have brought my notes with me, and if you will promise to be very careful of them, and to bring them back to me the first thing in the morning, I will lend them to you." With this, the Bishop opened and handed to the man a neat little black leather bag, inside which lay a neat little roll of manuscript. "Better take the bag to keep it in," added the Bishop. "Be sure and let me have them both back early to-morrow."

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The innocent, as is often the case, suffer for the guilty.

The reporter, when he examined the contents of the bag under a lamp in the cathedral vestibule, could hardly believe his good fortune. The careful Bishop's notes were so full and clear that for all practical purposes they were equal to a report. His work was already done. He felt so pleased with himself that he determined to treat himself to another "two" of gin, and, with this intent, made his way across to the little "public" beforementioned. "It's really excellent gin you sell here," he said to the barmaid when he had finished; "I think, my dear, I'll have just one more." At eleven the landlord gently but firmly insisted on his leaving, and he went, assisted, as far as the end of the court, by the potboy. After he was gone, the landlord noticed a neat little black bag on the seat where he had been lying. Examining it closely, he discovered a brass plate between the handles, and upon the brass plate were engraved the owner's name and title. Opening the bag, the landlord saw a neat little roll of manuscript, and across a corner of the manuscript was written the Bishop's name and address. The landlord blew a long, low whistle, and stood with his round eyes wide open gazing down at the open bag. Then he put on his hat and coat, and, taking the bag, went out down the court, chuckling hugely as he walked. He went straight to the house of the Resident Canon and rang the bell. "Tell Mr. ——," he said to the servant, "that I must see him to-night. I wouldn't disturb him at this late hour if it wasn't something very important." The landlord was ushered up. Closing the door softly behind him, he coughed deferentially. "Well, Mr. Peters" (I will call him "Peters"), said the Canon, "what is it?" "Well, sir," said Mr. Peters, slowly and deliberately, "it's about that there lease o' mine. I do hope you gentlemen will see your way to makin' it twenty-one year instead o' fourteen." "God bless the

man!" cried the Canon, jumping up indignantly, "you don't mean to say you've come to me at eleven o'clock on a Sunday night to talk about your lease." "Well, not entirely, sir," answered Peters, unabashed; "there's another little thing I wished to speak to you about, and that's this"—saying which, he laid the Bishop's bag before the Canon and told his story.

* * * *

The Bishop explains.

The Canon looked at Mr. Peters, and Mr. Peters looked at the Canon. "There must be some mistake," said the Canon. "There's no mistake," said the landlord. "I had my suspicions when I first clapped eyes on him. I seed he wasn't our usual sort, and I seed how he tried to hide his face. If he weren't the Bishop, then I don't know a Bishop when I sees one, that's all. Besides, there's his bag, and there's his sermon." Mr. Peters folded his arms and waited. The Canon pondered. Such things had been known to happen before in Church history. Why not again? "Does anyone know of this besides yourself?" asked the Canon. "Not a livin' soul," replied Mr. Peters, "as yet." "I think—I think, Mr. Peters," said the Canon, "that we may be able to extend your lease to twenty-one years." "Thank you kindly, sir," said the landlord, and departed. Next morning the Canon waited on the Bishop and laid the bag before him. "Oh," said the Bishop cheerfully, "he's sent it back by you, has he." "He has, sir," replied the Canon; "and thankful I am that it was to me he brought it. It is right," continued the Canon, "that I should inform your grace that I am aware of the circumstances under which it left your grace's hands." The Canon's eye was severe, and the Bishop laughed uneasily. "I suppose it wasn't quite the thing for me to do," he answered apologetically; "but there, all's well that ends well," and the Bishop laughed. This stung the Canon. "Oh, sir," he exclaimed, with a burst of fervour, "in Heaven's name, for the sake of our Church, let me entreat, let me pray you never to let such a thing occur again." The Bishop turned upon him angrily. "Why what a fuss you make about a little thing," he cried;—then, seeing the look of agony upon the other's face, he paused. "How did you get that bag?" he asked. "The landlord of the Cross Keys brought it me," answered the Canon, "you left it there last night." The Bishop gave a gasp, and sat down heavily. When he recovered his breath, he told the Canon the real history of the case, and the Canon is still trying to believe it.

Frank Mathew also tells an anecdote about a Bishop.

The man who was Sultan for a day only has long been famous, but here is a story of a man who was Bishop for a moment. Once upon a time there was a Cockney and Catholic tradesman, whose shop was in the Brompton Road, close to the Oratory. It was a strange little room, so full of Church ornaments and rare vestments that finding yourself in it you would have thought it was either a curiosity-shop or a sacristy. One day, as the tradesman, whose name was Jones, leant on his counter waiting—with more patience than hope—for customers, a stranger came in, wearing the everyday dress of a Catholic Bishop; his presence was stately, and his manner had so gentle and tender a dignity that all good women and most dogs loved him at first sight. He had recently been made Bishop, he said—and he spoke with such simple humility that Jones could hardly believe him—made Bishop of some outlandish country, and he wanted an outfit of vestments and altar-vessels. A proud man was Jones then; he brought out the treasures of his stock, crosiers and glittering mitres, mystic vestments—with long names that no layman is worthy to remember, even if he could—jewelled and golden chalices. The stranger was full of wonder; he was too lowly, he said, for such things, and yet he asked what could be too glorious or too costly for the high office that he had been forced to accept? He knew nothing of pomp and ceremony, his work had been among the poor, but would Jones put on a mitre and vestments to show him how they looked? So Jones robed himself from head to foot in the full pontificals of a Bishop; he put on wonderful vestments, stiff with jewels and gold, he leant his right hand on a priceless crosier, and a mitre shone on his head. Then, as he saw himself in the glass at the end of his shop, for a moment all the world changed to him. For that moment Jones forgot his drudging and huckstering life—he was no worried tradesman, but a brother of the Apostles, and a bulwark of the Church; he forgot his big ledgers and his daily task of bowing and smirking at chance customers; instead of the clatter of the Brompton Road, he heard the echo of Litanies; instead of his shop, he saw a Cathedral dimmed by incense and crammed with worshippers, and he was the Shepherd of that bowed multitude. For that moment he saw all his common and prosy history become noble and beautiful; and I, for one, have not the heart to blame him. But he bought that fine moment at a great price, for the stranger seized the two richest chalices, and fled into the street. Jones rushed to the

shop-door, but even if a Bishop's robes had been better suited for running, I doubt if he would have hunted that thief through Brompton with mitre and crosier for all the Roman chalices. And the thief and the chalices vanished down the Brompton Road.

* * * *

The Reverend N. H. M. tells clerical yarns.

The most picturesque and forceful of our Canadian Episcopate was unquestionably the late Bishop of Toronto, known to the profane as "Jock Strachan"—a Scotchman. Originally a Presbyterian, he drifted into Anglicanism, where his ability brought him early recognition and advancement. Innumerable incidents are related of his dry humour. One must suffice. A "delegation" waited on him to complain of the bibulous propensities of one of his subordinates. The Bishop, ever a staunch supporter of his clergy, listened somewhat impatiently as the misdeeds of the erring cleric were recited. "Why, my lord," remarked an obese churchwarden, "he buys whiskey *by the bottle*." "Tut, tut," retorted John of Toronto, "that's poor management, I buy mine *by the gallon*." A bishop recently made a pilgrimage to Motherland. His commissary directed that petitions should be offered in the customary place in the Litany for the safe conduct of his lordship. A forgetful, excitable Irishman omitted the suffrage where it should have been inserted, but immensely surprised his congregation by praying "for all women labouring of child, *especially the Lord Bishop of this diocese!*"

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Barr starts to tell an anecdote.

We read of Alpine climbing and its dangers, but one must be brought face to face with the reality before one can properly appreciate its perils. The other Sunday, I was in Leuk at the foot of the Gemmi Pass. This place is one of those unfortunate towns about whose name there is an instability which is bewildering. The English call it the Baths of Leuk; the French call it Loëche-les-Bains; the Swiss call it Ober-Baden; the Germans call it Bad-Leuk or Leuker-Bad; the Americans call it "Look," and the inhabitants give a Hibernian tinge to the pronunciation by naming it "Loike." By any other name, it would doubtless smell as badly. On this particular Sunday I heard the inspiring music of a band. The unregenerate man turns as naturally towards a brass band as he does to a dog fight. In front of one of the hotels I found the band playing, and the man with the bass drum was more than earning his salary. There was a momentous stir of preparation going on. A party

of French people numbering about twenty men and women were standing about, dressed in the most extreme Alpine costumes. Each one carried an ice-axe. Anybody may have an alpenstock for a couple of francs, and few are strong enough to resist the temptation to acquire an alpenstock in Switzerland, even if they have to buy it on the day they are coming home at Basle; but this crowd, as I have said, was armed with ice-axes, and an ice-axe means business. A fat man with a knapsack and a coil of rope on his shoulders seemed to be in charge of the expedition, and he hurried here and there, arranging, exhorting, and encouraging the intrepid explorers. One could see that he was a brave and determined man, yet he was evidently much impressed with the responsibility of his position, and he felt that a mistake on his part might be fatal to the party in his charge. He marshalled them two and two together, placed the band at the head of the crowd, and in a voice tremulous with emotion gave the command "Forward." He waved his ice-axe in the air, the whole party cheered, the band struck up a march, and tearful farewells were interrupted as they all moved off on their bold and desperate enterprise. The streets were lined with silent citizens, who took off their hats out of respect to this devoted procession, for daring bravery always exacts homage. I thought the crowd were at least going to the top of the Matterhorn, and perhaps further, for there is no ice near Leuk except the bits the waiter reluctantly brings to cool your drinks with, when you demand it, and an ice-axe is not necessary in dealing with that. I found, however, that they were merely going about a quarter of the way up the Gemmi Pass to a spot where a band playing makes strange echoes, and where, if you sit on the well-made road some distance below, the music appears to come out of the eternal rocks. The Pass is a favourite route for women and very young children. The party came back in time for dinner with cheers and music, and they had on their faces that flushed look of satisfaction which shows that a deed of daring had been safely accomplished.

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He recounts how he once nearly saved a child from death.

People's ideas about danger differ. What frightens one man may merely delight another. I got into trouble in the Alps by apparently over-estimating danger. Two of us took a little trip to a place called Nessle. Nessle is somewhat smaller than London, consisting of four houses and a church, but, on the other hand, the tip of that church spire is much higher above the

sea than the cross of St. Paul's. Service is held in the church at Nessle three times a year, and here again it has the advantage of St. Paul's, because it will hold all the inhabitants of the place and one more. The church has standing room for eleven persons. Nessle is built on a ledge situated so near the moon that there is no need for street lamps. If the Rev. Mr. Haweis wants to communicate with Mars he should go to Nessle, and step off on that planet when it comes around. There is an unprotected ledge of table rock overhanging all creation at Nessle, and the depth of the awful drop from this ledge I estimated to be about a mile and a half sheer down. We found this ledge to be the popular playground of the little village. A group of children were enjoying a game of tag, skipping wildly around and hopping over crevices through which if they dropped they would be considerably older before they broke through the roof of a châlet of the toy village dim in the distance below. One little fellow, too young to engage in the game, sat serenely on the edge of the cliff with his feet dangling contentedly over the village so far beneath. I thought I might as well save him, so I crawled to where he sat, and jerked him from the ledge, telling him to keep away from the precipice. The children were all panic-stricken at this interference. They gave the alarm, and brought out the four mothers of the place. I explained to the owner of the boy the danger of his position. She advised me to mind my own business, which is always good advice, and emphasised her resentment by placing the boy on the spot from which I had rescued him, daring me to selfishly interfere with the pleasure of little children who were doing no harm to me. The woman seemed to have no thought for the innocent villagers below; but then, perhaps, they were accustomed to having children drop down upon them from the clouds. People have to get used to a great number of things in Switzerland.

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Burgin tells of Edward Bulwer Lytton and "Zanoni."

Many, many years ago, a certain small boy, to wit myself, played truant from school one delicious summer afternoon. Of course, the morrow would bring punishment in its train, but, as I lay face downward on the grass beneath an old tree in the garden, and prepared to continue reading a book which I had again secreted from the library, to-morrow seemed afar off, a time to be ignored, with its inevitable five hundred lines of Virgil to write out in expiation of my crime. Then I began to read, the only sound which stirred the stillness being the occasional drowsy pipe

of a somnolent thrush hard by in the limes, or the drone of a blundering "drumble bee." The mystic "Zanoni" proved to be a little confusing to my youthful and untutored mind. Some of its grandiloquent phrases were as incomprehensible as "that blessed word Mesopotamia." Still, I read drowsily on, gradually becoming more confused, but unwilling to give in, and all the while dimly conscious of approaching wheels. A shadow glided across the grass, and disappeared, as a rather thin, tall man came up to me, sat down, and looked over my shoulder. (I didn't trouble to rise.) "Hum," said the man, in a surprised tone. "How do you get on with it?" and picked up my book. "Oh, I'm trying to fog it out," was my despondent reply, whereupon the stranger eloquently explained. Suddenly, he stopped in the middle of a sonorous sentence. "It's harder than I thought," he said; "and I wrote it." He got up, nodded a smiling farewell, and entered the house, whither I dare not follow him for fear of condign punishment. When I returned from school (?) that evening, I learnt that he had driven over from Totteridge to see my father. We met some years later in a stuffy legal office; but Lord Lytton was deaf and preoccupied, and didn't know me (how should he?), so there was no sequel to the story. There seldom is a sequel to stories in real life.

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Phillpotts introduces the ladies.

Though the feminine standard of humour is in some measure a low one; though women fail to grasp the significance of subtle jesting, and, in short, rarely know a good joke when they see it, yet, in justice to the sex, I would point out that it sometimes happens they will find fun where the most keen male humourist would never look for such a thing. I heard, once upon a time, of an ancient dame whose business it was to lay out the dead. Now such a calling suggests no great opportunities towards the comic upon the face of it; and yet that venerable woman abounded in rollicking little reminiscences and choice anecdotes culled from her profession. Her death's head always had a cap and bells on its bony skull.

* * * *

And discusses their sense of humour.

But here is the anecdote I have, to show from what unlikely sources the feminine mind extracts genial fun. At a large medical conversazione, where brains and beauty were represented in about equal proportions, a youthful scientist had charge of sundry microscopes, within which were placed pathological specimens of various sorts,

all likely to interest the intelligent mind. Our young man explained the beauties of his collection to the average crowd of conversazione frequenters. People admired, and said it was very instructive, and asked fatuous questions, and then edged away to more popular forms of amusement. But presently there came along a damsel of great beauty, with pretty eyes, and white shoulders, and a very attractive manner. Though a scientist, our scholar was also a man. So he took no little trouble for her, and made everything as clear as day, and finally arranged the Bacillus of Consumption under his lenses and asked her whether she would care to see it. She said she should be delighted; so he explained the nature of the awful germ, told her the number of lives it claimed annually, described the oceans of human misery which it was responsible for, drew death-bed scenes, and generally preluded the exhibition in a most dramatic way. After which, standing aside, he bid her gaze upon the scourge. She fumbled at the microscope a moment, then uttered a musical little laugh and said: "Oh, there they are! How jolly!" "I beg your pardon?" remarked her mentor, jumping as though something had stung him. "Why they're like little fat sausages, are they not? I'd no idea these scientific affairs were so funny. It's delightful. Now show me a flea, please. Will you?" But he didn't. He was a scientist first, a man afterwards. He crept away into a recess out of sight, and tore his hair and became a rabid misogynist. That true story shows what I mean. If anybody can get a laugh out of the germs of phthisis, they must not only be easy to amuse, but surely possess exceptional capacities towards appreciation of the subtly comic.

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Alden tells of the aitchless Englishman.

Nothing can shake the conviction of the average American that every person born in England, from Her Majesty the Queen down to the humblest costermonger, misplaces the letter "H." Of course, this peculiarity does not appear in the printed speeches of, say, Mr. Gladstone for example, but all Chicago believes that when he is discussing the Irish question he declares that "Hireland must and shall have 'Ome Rule." Equally strong is the average English belief that all Americans habitually use the dialect in which Mr. Bret Harte's delightful Californians speak; and were the *Times* correspondent to represent President Harrison as saying that "he calc'lated the United States could chaw up the Chilians pretty darned small," the remark would be recognised by most

Englishmen as thoroughly characteristic. That there are Englishmen who misplace their "H's," and Americans who "calc'late," is, however, undoubtedly true. The curious thing about it is that no one who is guilty of these things is ever aware of the fact. I knew an Englishman who had become a naturalised American citizen, and lived in Hoboken, New Jersey. He once told me that he had gone to the polls to vote, and the inspector had asked him where he lived. Said my friend, "I told him in 'Oboken, and then he said, 'You're an Englishman.' Now, 'ow did he know that I was an Englishman?" Nothing could have convinced that man that he ever left off an "H." He used to concede that there were uneducated Cockneys who were addicted to the practice, but he maintained that no Englishman who knew how to read or write ever had the slightest trouble with his "H's.'

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And of the calc'lating American.

As for the American who talks the Bret Hartean dialect, I have met him on two recent occasions. I was at Pompeii, standing at the door of the little Diomede restaurant—where, if you like Italian cooking, you can get a capital dinner—when a Neapolitan cab, containing a typical American colonel and a Neapolitan guide, drove up. The colonel descended, and, standing with his legs wide apart and his hands in his trousers pockets, surveyed the horse in silence, and thoughtfully expectorated. Presently he remarked to the universe in general, and to no one in particular, "I calc'lated to get the best hoss in Naples, and b'gosh I got him!" Had I read this truthful anecdote in an English newspaper I should have thought for the thousandth time, "How absurd it is to represent an American as speaking in this utterly conventional and preposterous way"; but here was the living and expectorating proof that the conventional American of the Hartean type actually exists, and, what is worse, comes and parades himself at Pompeii unconscious of the anachronistic outrage of which he is guilty.

* * * *

He meets a countryman.

My other American I met at Milan. He wore a travelling cap, and was leaning in an exhausted attitude against a pillar of the railway station, while in front of him stood a local porter, loaded down with rugs, and what the owner doubtless called his "grip-sack." It appeared that the American had accidentally left his hat in a railway train that had gone on to Turin, and he was anxious to

recover it. The porter was suggesting to him in Italian that he should apply to the stationmaster, and the American, rendered indignant by being addressed in an unknown tongue, suddenly burst out with the remark. "I ain't talking about that! I'm talking about *a hat!* a HAT! gol-darn your darned hide!"

* * * *

And Interpreteth for him.

I made the American's acquaintance by acting as interpreter for him, and we afterwards went on to Genoa together. I found that he was travelling in Italy as the agent of a manufacturer of elevators, and that he had been trying to induce the Italian Government to put an elevator into the Coliseum, and was now going back to Rome to obtain an interview with the Pope, in the hope of securing his Holiness's approval of an elevator to be placed in the tower of Giotto, in Florence. He had no words to express his contempt for the stupidity of the Italians who could not see that the Coliseum would be greatly improved by Smith & Jones's patent safety elevator, and, although he held his final estimate of the Pope and the Roman Catholic religion in suspense until after the final decision as to Giotto's tower, it was easy to see that he had little faith in either. "They're too darned slow, the whole lot of them," he sadly remarked. "There ain't no enterprise in this country, b'gosh! and I don't expect the Pope's any smarter than the rest of them." I was outwardly kind to this man because he was alone, and comparatively helpless, but inwardly I thirsted for his blood. Not simply because he wanted to insult the Coliseum with his abominable invention, or because he hoped to outrage the Roman Catholic religion, and befoul the Lily tower by shooting people from the bottom to the top of it, but because he was a conclusive proof that the type of American in whom I had hitherto disbelieved existed. I had almost convinced myself that I had dreamed the Pompeiian colonel, or, if not, that he was a humourist who was playing a practical joke for my benefit, but the miscreant who wanted "to put an elevator, b'gosh! in the Coliseum" was horribly real, and not even a professional and athletic atheist could have disbelieved in him.

Mr. Walter Besant Replies to Mr. Grant Allen.

My friend Mr. Grant Allen has, in his paper in the last number of the *Idler*, made use of my name in a manner calculated to do me serious injury. For this reason I beg the Editors' indulgence for a word of explanation. He says that I will not "allow of any generosity among publishers."

This statement contains two libels. The first in the implied charge against me of being in any way hostile to publishers. The second in the statement that I have denied the existence of generosity among publishers.

As regards the first, I complain that in using my name he follows the bad habit, too prevalent, of taking a name instead of a principle.

The Society of Authors has exposed, and will continue to expose, the malpractices of certain fraudulent persons who disgrace the calling of publishers. Against honourable houses the Society has not, and cannot have, the least animosity.

The charge about "generosity" is absurd. One might as well be charged with not allowing to a body of men the ordinary emotions of pity, friendship, or love. What the Society has said, and will continue to say, is that for a man of letters to assume the attitude of a mendicant, and to stand, hat in hand, begging for "generosity," is humiliating to literature and degrading to the author. Literary property is governed by the same laws as any other kind of property. Publishers are men of business who deal with this kind of property. If one has a house to sell, one does not ask the buyer for generosity. On the contrary, the seller finds out what the house is worth, and gets as near an approach to that sum as he can.

Grant Allen also says in the same paper that the "cost of production is obnoxious to me." Why is it obnoxious to me? Why does he say this? The Society, through its officers, and with great trouble, has ascertained what the cost of producing the ordinary kind of book really is, and has published a pamphlet—a most useful pamphlet—giving these figures. The Society has also exposed certain frauds connected with the cost of production. My name is not on the title page of this pamphlet, and the work was not done by me. I have no objection to bearing any odium which my connection with this Society may bring upon me from the persons whose practices it has exposed; but I do protest in the strongest manner against being represented as a meddlesome mischief-maker.

WALTER BESANT.

"HADDON HALL."

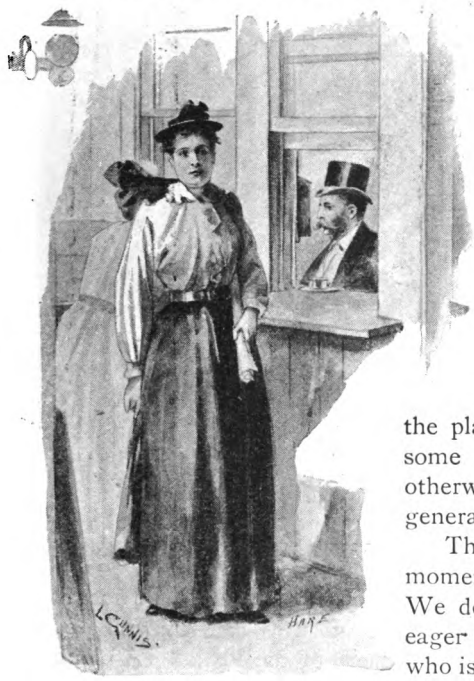
THE IDLER.

Rehearsing the Savoy Opera.

By G. B. Burgin.

Illustrations by Louis Gunnis.

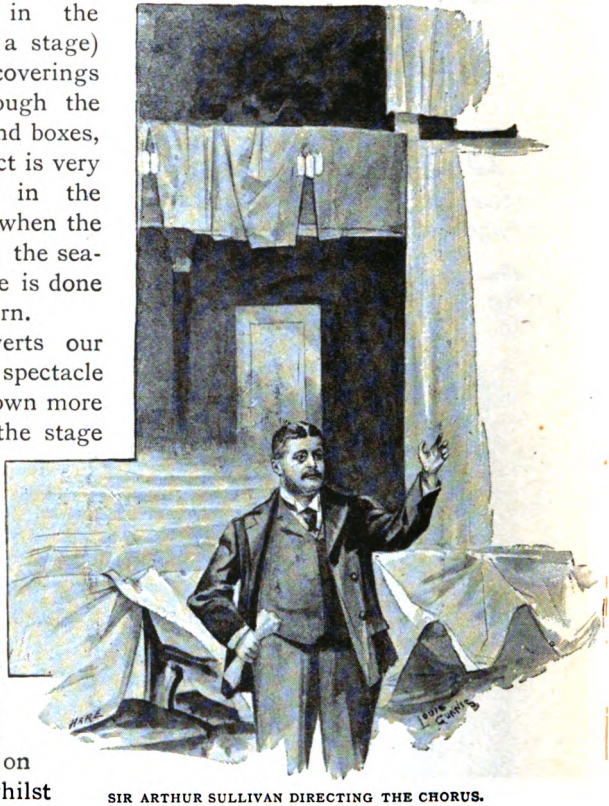
LOUNGERS at the Savoy stage door regard us somewhat enviously as we pass the narrow portal, and a ray of September sunlight falls upon the features of the courteous Cerberus who momentarily bars the way. The production of a magic piece of pasteboard, with Mr. D'Oyly Carte's signature attached to it, acts as an open sesame to the undress rehearsals of "Haddon Hall." Our artist is in quest of the unconventional, the stage world as it really is before the curtain rises, and the public hail with delight the pretty picture set before them. Other artists will sketch the scene on the first night of the play; he is desirous of giving some unrehearsed effects, which otherwise would not reach the general public.



AT THE STAGE DOOR.

The pretty picture at this moment is not completely framed. We descend many narrow steps in eager pursuit of the active youth who is told off to guide our devious feet. Disillusion awaits us on the threshold. He is a call-boy, but not in his shirt-sleeves; he does not carry porter pots after the manner of the call-boy in fiction; and he asks us, if we want anything

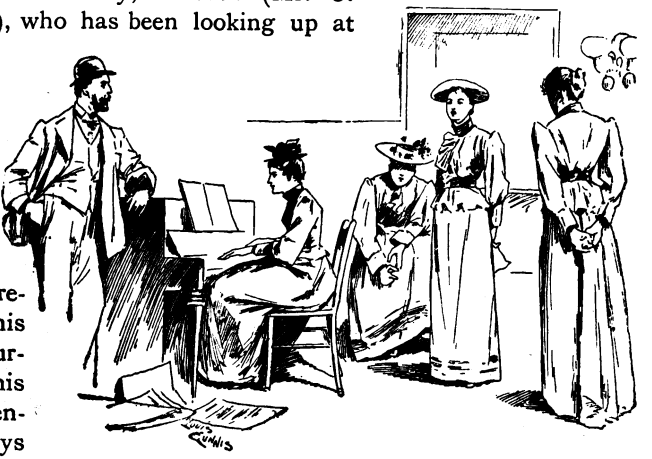
else, to "be good enough" to let him know, first pausing to state that we are passing "the flies." At first, we don't see any flies. Then he directs our attention to a room at the back of the stage, which looks very like the deck of a steamer. Ropes run up from the floor into space, and, gazing over the steamer's deck, we notice what seems to be a tattered tarpaulin covering the stage. Electric lights radiate in every direction. Beyond the stage (we can see through the holes in the tarpaulin that it is a stage) ghostly holland coverings loom palely up through the gloom of the stalls and boxes, and the general effect is very like that produced in the family drawing-room when the family have gone to the sea-side, and the furniture is done up to await their return.



SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN DIRECTING THE CHORUS.

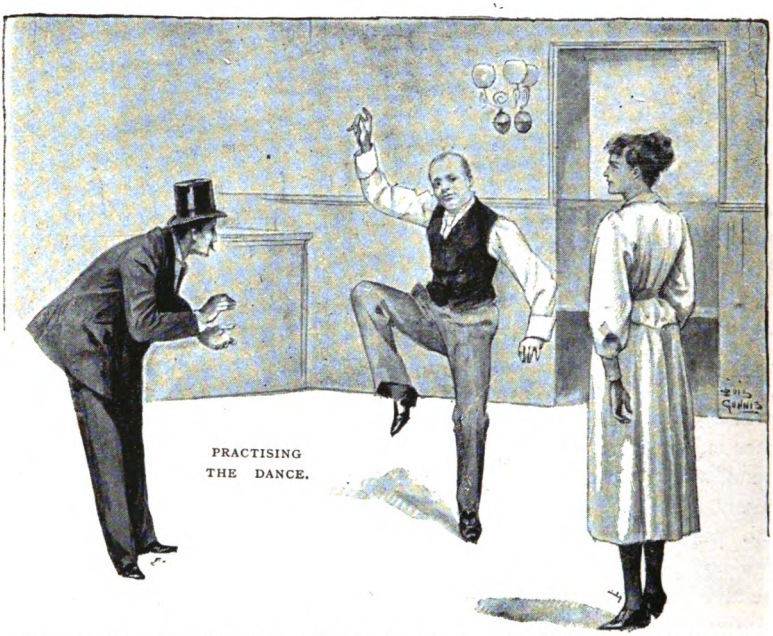
The call-boy diverts our attention from this spectacle as we follow him down more stairs, and stand on the stage beneath a tree whose branches outspread as widely as the far-famed Igdrasil, which shadowed Valhalla and rooted in the underworld. The carpenters are busily engaged in tacking up extra branches, and dropping nails on our devoted heads, whilst a couple of girls methodically glue strips of tapestry to huge panels which are meant for that great hall built in the fifteenth century and so admirably described by Scott in "Peveril of the Peak." A piano is placed on the prompt side (left, facing the audience), and is kept in countenance by a small green-baize covered table, on which lie prompt-books and music-scores. Miss Lucile Hill (*Dorothy*) chats with the prompter and her aged father (he is about

three or four-and-twenty), Mr. Richard Green. Nobody else seems to have anything very pressing to do except the stage carpenters and tapestry workers. The carpenters, however, continue to shower down painfully realistic tin-tacks and foliage from the huge tree facing the hall. From the refreshment-room at the other end of the theatre comes the hum of many voices and the tuneful tinkle of a piano. Mr. Grundy leans over the back of the piano talking to the chorus-mistress, Mrs. Russell. Presently, Miss Brandram, who is walking about the room, begins to sing. Mr. Grundy nods approvingly and beats time. When Miss Brandram's exquisite voice ceases its flood of liquid melody, *Oswald* (Mr. C. Kenningham), who has been looking up at the ceiling in deep cogitation, suddenly bursts into song. Then, Miss Brandram retaliates. Mr. Grundy, thereupon, thrusts his round hat further back on his head, and attentively surveys the pair. The call-boy puts his head in, and Miss Brandram successfully negotiates the narrow temporary bridge which connects the stalls and the stage. Mr. Grundy follows her, as the vivacious Miss Dorothy Vane (*Dorcas*), clad in a terra-cotta blouse and short skirt of some light material, takes an energetic dancing lesson, in conjunction with Mr. Kenningham, from the indefatigable Mr. D'Auban, who "one, two, three, fours" all round the room, and coruscates between them like a human firework with a tall hat on. Miss Vane protests that it is a hard dance, but the cheery Mr. D'Auban speedily convinces her to the contrary with a few agile steps, and she gives place to Mr. W. H. Denny (*The McCrankie*) and Miss Nita Cole (*Nance*). The piano tinkles, Mr. D'Auban is more energetic than ever, and Mr. Denny and Miss Cole break out into a wild terpsichorean revel, the lady



PRACTISING VOICES.

being clad in a very becoming white flannel costume, and Mr. Denny in all his native majesty and the unfettered ease of shirt-sleeves. "It is some time since," he confides to me, "I've played such an active part," and beguiles a restful interval by narrating how he once had a somewhat animated discussion with a man named Stewart, who was head of the stage carpenters at a theatre, and hated him cordially ever after. A few years later, Mr. Denny returned to the theatre as stage manager of a company, and found Stewart in his old place. When the company



PRACTISING THE DANCE.

began to rehearse, he said to Stewart, not without some misgivings:

"Oh, Stewart, for this act we'll use the centre door."

"It's painted oot," said Stewart.

"Very well, then, we'll try the palace gate."

"It's painted oot."

"Hang it all, then, use your discretion."

"It's painted oot," returned the imperturbable Scot.

After this professional anecdote, we adjourn to the stage. Mr. Grundy stands on the bridge at mid-day, and Mr. Charles Harris (the stage manager) calls in stentorian tones for "Kenningham." When the echoes have subsided, the call-boy's

shriller notes rend the air in an equally futile quest. Another boy dives into the mysterious recesses at the back of the stage, the carpenters refrain from hammering, and, like Colonel Crockett's coon, come down from the boughs, as Mr. Kenningham enters, profoundly unconscious that he has been called above a whisper.

Mr. Grundy rehearses his play admirably. For instance, *Oswald* and *Dorcas* are under the all-pervading tree, and promptly begin to flirt, after the manner of stage lovers from time immemorial.

Dorcas: Our acquaintance is too young for that.

Oswald: Thou art a winsome *wench*, but thou art coy.

(As this is their first meeting, and Oswald has attempted to kiss Dorcas, the remark seems rather uncalled for on his part; but stage lovers always like to condense existence and come to the point within a few minutes of their first meeting. Besides, it saves time.)

Mr. Grundy: No, no. Differently, please.

REHEARSING A FLIRTATION.

Oswald: Thou art a *winsome* wench, but thou art coy.

Mr. Grundy: Try it again, please.

Oswald: Thou art a *winsome* wench, but thou art *coy*.

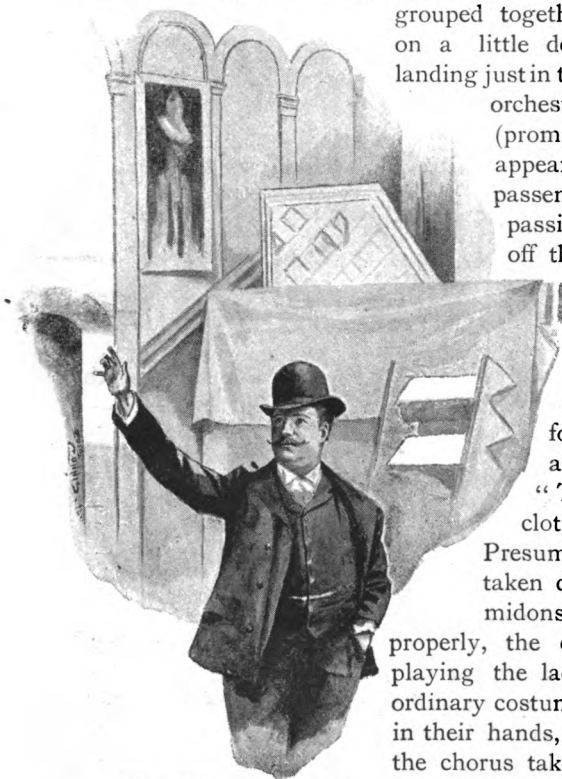
Mr. Grundy: Yes, that way, please.

(During this discussion, the "winsome wench" maintains an attitude of impartial attention. Directly the matter is settled, a pleased smile flits over her pretty face.)

We adjourn for lunch, and meet again at five.

The holland coverings still remain in the theatre, but the electric light is full on. At the back of the stalls are the young ladies of the chorus, chatting merrily together, one more demurely-minded than the rest steeling her mind against frivolity by a course of plain knitting. "Turn on the electric light. Where's the back light?" Mr. Charles Harris demands from some unknown recess. "Come

along, chorus," and with a *frou-frou* of garments the ladies of the chorus "come along," as Sir Arthur Sullivan takes his place in the middle of the stalls, and Mr. Grundy perches up aloft in the dress circle. Sir Arthur bears signs of ill-health in his pale face. The music for the two first acts was written on his sick-bed. He is tall, dark, slightly bald, stoops a little, and wears an eye-glass in his right eye. When the curtain goes up, he puts aside his cigar, and the curtain comes down again. Mr. Harris's energetic voice is heard soaring upwards to "the flies" in tones of mingled entreaty, exhortation, commination, expostulation, and despair. Mr. Frank Cellier, Mrs. Russell, and the prompter are all grouped together on a little deal landing just in the orchestra (prompt side), and have the appearance of shipwrecked passengers waiting for a passing vessel to take them off their wooden island, the piano doing duty for a sea-chest. The curtain goes up and down, Sir Arthur every now and then clapping his hands for it to stop. A fresh arrangement is tried. "Take down that back cloth," cries Mr. Harris. Presumably the back cloth is taken down by his aerial myrmidons, for the light falls properly, the curtain draws up, displaying the ladies of the chorus in ordinary costume, but holding flowers in their hands, and the gentlemen of the chorus take off their bowler hats in courtly style to the ladies of the



"MR HARRIS WANTS TO KNOW WHERE'S THAT BACK LIGHT."

chorus, who respond with deep curtseys, rather at variance with their modern costumes. Then we go on with the vocal remarks of the ladies of the chorus about the stately homes of England—remarks which have a strong flavour of Mrs. Hemans about them.

Sir Arthur (suddenly clapping his hands): "*Rallentando*, please."

Sir Arthur pats the time of the next chorus with his hands, and suddenly ejaculates, "More *staccato*, please." The ladies of the chorus make it so. In obedience to another remark from Sir Arthur, they sing "*dolce*," and he leans back with a satisfied smile, saying, as he does so, "Pretty picture, isn't it?" Then, to chorus-mistress, "Two bars more, please. Rum-tum, tum-tum."

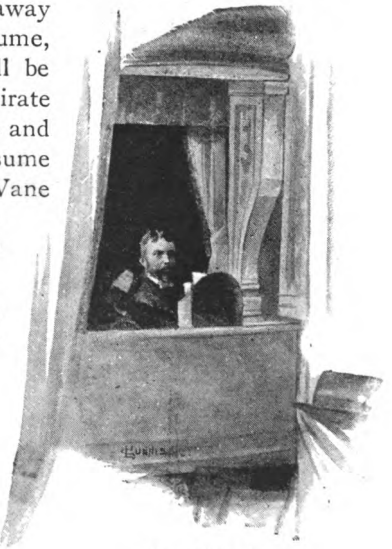
Mr. Rutland Barrington, sitting in the stalls, does not seem at all disconcerted by prolonged rehearsals, but jovially writes a telegram: "Rehearsal late. Supper at eleven; shan't be home before." The stage-parent becomes angry. "Bandy not words with me," he says to *Dorothy*. "Bandy not words with me. No longer do I beg thee, I command." Miss Hill brushes away a piece of fluff from her pretty costume, and mildly intimates that if he will be so unreasonable, he'll regret it. The irate parent fades away with *Lady Vernon* and *Dorothy*, and *Oswald* and *Dorcas* resume the flirtation of the morning. Miss Vane piteously exclaims that she has forgotten her dance. *Oswald* gives her a letter, and Miss Hill enters.

"A little too soon, I think," says Sir Arthur, and Miss Hill smilingly retreats.

Miss Hill wants to know:

> "Oh, tell me what is a maid to say?
> What is a maid to do?
> When heart says 'Go,' and duty 'Stay,'
> And she'd to both be true?"

Dorcas and *Oswald* musically join in the query. Sir Arthur again



MR. D'OYLY CARTE.

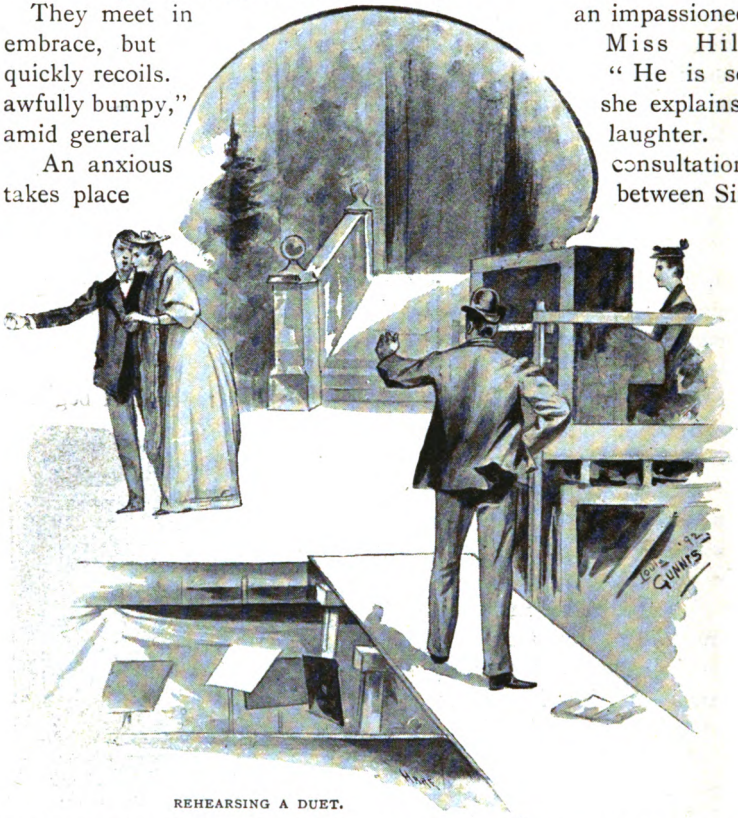
claps his hands: "Not quite so emotionally, if you please, Miss Vane. Drop the notes out simply."

Mr. Courtice Pounds (the hero) comes on mournfully, and *Dorothy*, in order to test her lover, entreats him to become a Roundhead.

John Manners: False to myself, I should be false to thee, and Heaven would curse our love.

Dorothy: Now am I thine for ever.

They meet in an impassioned embrace, but Miss Hill quickly recoils. "He is so awfully bumpy," she explains, amid general laughter. An anxious consultation takes place between Sir



REHEARSING A DUET.

Arthur, Mr. Charles Harris, and Mr. Grundy as to how *Dorothy* is to "go off."

Sir Arthur: What is she to do going off? Can't she sing a bar or two?

Mr. Grundy: I don't think so. The Puritans are coming on, and they'll catch her.

Sir Arthur: No, she can't sing anything there. They are much more likely to catch her if she stays.

The Puritans appear, headed by *Rupert Vernon*, who has grave doubts as to the utility of Puritanism, and displays a tendency towards "the carnal and pernicious polka."

MISS HILL.

The unfortunate Puritans have the most troublesome exits and entrances. They are constantly being grouped and re-arranged, told to open their mouths, shut their eyes, or cough, or sneeze together. But they persevere, and ultimately get their "business" perfectly. It seems an easy thing to stand on the stage, and not say anything but merely listen and nod. When, however, you have to nod at exactly the same time as six other persons, or move your head when they do, it is not so easy.

Sir Arthur suddenly crosses the bridge and goes to the piano. *Dorothy's* parents return, and she confirms her previous statement that she will not marry *Rupert Vernon*, and the curtain falls.

Acts two and three are rehearsed in a similar manner, and on the Monday night before the eventful Saturday fixed for the production of the play, several hours are occupied by Sir Arthur Sullivan, Mr. D'Oyly Carte, Mr. Charles Harris, and Madame Auguste and Mr. Percy Anderson, in inspecting "the principals" in their dresses and "make up." Mr. Denny piteously pleads that he has no "make up" with him, and also urges the propriety of his appearing in brown tights, so that he may not shock the County Council, and his knees may seem properly sunburnt. Then he is "passed," and Miss Hill enters, clad in a gorgeous blue costume. Each actor or actress stands on a strip of carpet, whilst Sir Arthur, cigarette in hand, sits some few feet away. The heroine's home-coming dress is voted too brilliant a combination of blue and red, and white is substituted for red. Mr. Courtice Pounds and *Oswald* amicably exchange wigs, whilst Mr. Green begs to be allowed to knock ten or twenty years off his age. When stately Miss Brandram appears, in ruby velvet, her magnificent train is laid tenderly on the carpet. She wants to

MISS COLE.

know whether she shall wear a ruby heart with her pearl necklace, but Sir Arthur thinks the necklace sufficient. Miss Brandram gathers up her train to make way for Miss Cole, whose three dresses are simply perfect in their elegant simplicity and lovely colouring, particularly the rich yellow satin one.

The Major Domo (he is six feet three in his stockinged feet) wants another three inches added to his tunic. This is conceded, and he departs to lengthen it. Somebody treads on Mrs. D'Oyly Carte's dog, Trapp, whose intelligent interest in the proceedings (he has already sniffed his objection to Mr. Denny's knees in a truly Grundeian spirit) changes to a dismal howl. Skirts are lengthened or shortened, as the case may be, and Miss Vane's wig reorganised by the deft Clarkson, who skips about effecting the most marvellous transformations with a few rapid touches. Mr. Rutland Barrington's cheerful voice is heard asking whether he can have some additional hooks on his cloak. Mr. Green next passes in review, and departs light-heartedly, trolling —"In days of old."

THE SAVOY DOG.

Not only is every dress carefully criticised, but it is also tried in juxtaposition with those worn in the same scene. Extreme care is bestowed on the most trifling dress, or its accessories. Every lady of the chorus has her exact position marked out in chalk on the stage; every movement is accurately timed; every group carefully studied. By all these elaborate precautions alone can the Savoy *tout ensemble* be attained. And then there is the everlasting electric light, every effect of which is studied hundreds and hundreds of times.

The duties of a stage manager are many and varied. Mr. Charles Harris has to keep an eye on everything and everybody.

"Why doesn t that light shine?" he demands, looking up into space. "'Cause the spirits is all burnt out," rejoins a voice. "Then buy a ha'porth," retorts the worried manager, and the incident terminates. At another time, the ladies of the chorus look too amiable. "Do lose your tempers, ladies," Mr. Harris implores. "Please *do* lose your tempers. I know it's a trial to you, but *do* lose your tempers"—and then the ladies of the chorus veil their smiles and become angry.

MR. F. CELLIER.

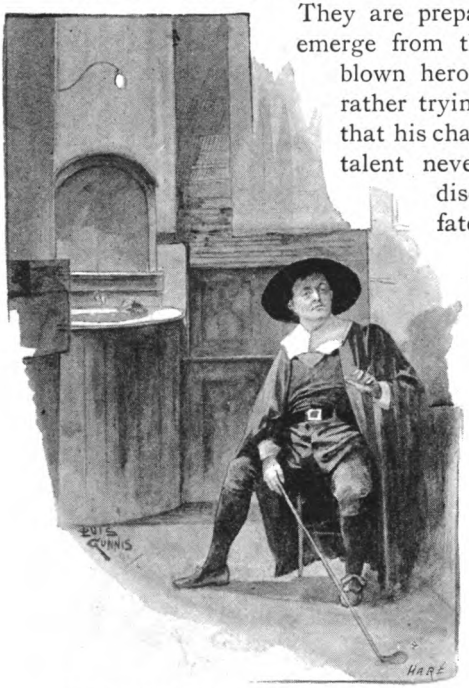
In a narrow passage leading to the stage is pasted up a "typed" document as follows:

Monday. Band, and *voices on chairs*, St. Andrew's Hall.
Tuesday. Principals and six Puritans in dialogue with Mr. Grundy.
22nd Sept. Dress rehearsal with orchestra.
23rd ,, 2.30 (for 3 sharp), full dress rehearsal.
24th ,, Production.

On the Thursday before "production," after the first act, that conscientious Puritan, Mr. Barrington, hies him to his dressing-room to partake of much-needed refreshment. The dressing-room itself is a comfortable little place, with a big mirror on the table, and all technical properties necessary for making up. There are half-a-dozen counterfeit presentments of Mr. Barrington on the walls, and a golf club in a corner. Whilst Mr. Barrington is being sketched he runs his eye over a bill of fare, and demands of the *garçon*, "*Avez vous aussi des beans?*" ("I've forgotten the French for 'beans.' Oh, *haricots verts?* Thanks. I'll give him 'beans' in French and English.") It will be a surprise to many people to know that Mr. Barrington is now a sportive contributor to *Punch*. Perhaps it is another form of his genial humour which leads him to thus commence his literary career with a serious periodical. "When I sing for the first time at rehearsal," he says, "without my music, and Sir Arthur Sullivan is at the piano, I very often invent an admirable bit of recitative, upon which he remarks: 'Very nice, indeed, Barrington, but I didn't write

it.' Then, of course, I give way, and sing what he wishes, although I have my own opinion of the alteration. I never take my music home, but always know it in two rehearsals. It is all knack." Then the *garçon* and the cutlets and beans arrive, and Mr. Barrington snatches a hasty meal.

During the time the rehearsals are going on, the "understudies" watch every look, tone, and gesture of their principals. They are prepared at a moment's notice to emerge from their chrysalis state into full-blown heroes and heroines. It must be rather trying to the understudy to know that his chance may never "come off," his talent never please an enthusiastic and discriminating public. But the fateful evening has arrived, and there is always a probability that his prototype may catch cold. Miss Brandram, who has not had a cold for months, feels one coming on, and goes about inhaling a menthol tube.



MR. RUTLAND BARRINGTON IN HIS DRESSING-ROOM.

Here are her sentiments on the eve of a new piece:

"On the production of a new piece I am *very very* nervous, most anxious to please the management, author and composer, and, above all, the British public; and I am quite sure I feel as anxious for a success as Mr. D'Oyly Carte does. My voice always seems a long way off, and I have the utmost difficulty in controlling it. Thank goodness! I don't forget my words."

Miss Vane confesses that she is "horribly frightened! At the same time, I feel an intense anxiety to make a success, which I shall do all in my power to achieve. I experience a sort of nightmare during the overture, knowing how soon I must 'go on' and face everybody. Hark! It's commencing," and she lightly trips away.

Mr. Kenningham thinks: "Oh, the sensation principally pro-

minent is one of anxiety as to whether the new piece is likely to catch on and run. This dwarfs all personal considerations, unless you happen to have a part on which the success or failure of a piece depends. Such parts are happily rare. My own feeling about myself is that I am intensely nervous. Before going on for the first time, either on a first night or any night, I cannot keep quiet. I am trembling in every limb ; my heart beats in double quick time; but, strange to say, the moment I am on these feelings depart, and I am, very luckily for me, as cool as a cucumber, unless the exigencies of the piece require me to be otherwise. Of course, I am intensely excited about to-night's production, and am longing for the time to hurry up and get it over. I don't fear for the success of 'Haddon Hall' so far as the educated and artistic classes are concerned, but there is always a doubt as to how that peculiar and immensely powerful body whom we designate the 'general public' are going to take it. Anyway, if the piece has its due, it will go."

Miss Nita Cole, as she flies by, declares that "the whole nervous system is at its highest tension. Hysteria seems imminent in the most stolid, and you possess a great desire to assist everyone in their parts, although, perhaps, incompetent to play your own. You feel on good terms with mankind in general, and the greater the success the greater the inclination to break down."

MISS BRANDRAM.

Mr. Green's sensations, however, are more serious than any of the others : "For the week previous to the production I have not had a good night's rest, waking at all hours, my first thoughts being of the opera. Now, to-night I was so bad with nervousness that I had the greatest difficulty in eating my dinner. However, about six o'clock, I got over that feeling a great deal, and when I had dressed for the part I felt much better. Previous to the production of 'Ivanhoe' I was sleeping with a great chum of mine, and he was startled one night by my singing out, 'Heralds, sound the challenge!' a phrase I sang in 'Ivanhoe' as Prince John. One gets so anxious over one's part that it is impossible to think of anything else."

Carriage after carriage dashes up outside, and all the wealth, beauty, and fashion of London are concentrated in the stalls, whilst a dense crowd still, hopefully but vainly, waits for admission. Full of *esprit de corps*, the long-tried companions in arms behind the scenes prepare to win another great success or bravely bear defeat. Carpenters in shirt-sleeves, like Captain Cuttle, "stand by." There is a little stir in the densely-packed theatre; the critics, mindful of the dignity of their high office, glance proudly round, and pretend to have looked in just to put things right; Sir Arthur enters from his subterranean lair beneath the stage; bows to the deafening applause; and the opera commences.

Novel Notes.

By Jerome K. Jerome. Illustrations by J. Gülich.

VII.

DOES man ever reform? Balzac says he doesn't. So far as my experience goes it agrees with that of Balzac—a fact the admirers of that author are at liberty to make what use of they please.

When I was young and accustomed to take my views of life from people who were older than myself, and who knew better, so they said, I used to believe that he did. Examples of "reformed characters" were frequently pointed out to me—indeed, our village, situate a few miles from a small seaport town, seemed to be peculiarly rich in such. They were, from all accounts, including their own, persons who had formerly behaved with quite unnecessary depravity, and who, at the time I knew them, appeared to be going to equally objectionable lengths in the opposite direction. They invariably belonged to one of two classes, the low-spirited or the aggressively unpleasant. They said, and I believed, that they were happy; but I used to reflect how very sad they must have been before they were happy.

"OF UNPREPOSSESSING APPEARANCE, BUT IRREPROACHABLE VIEWS."

One of them, a small, sad-eyed old man with a piping voice, had been exceptionally wild in his youth. What had been his special villainy I could never discover. People responded to my inquiries that he had been, "Oh, generally bad," and increased my longing for detail by adding that little boys ought not to want to know about such things. From their

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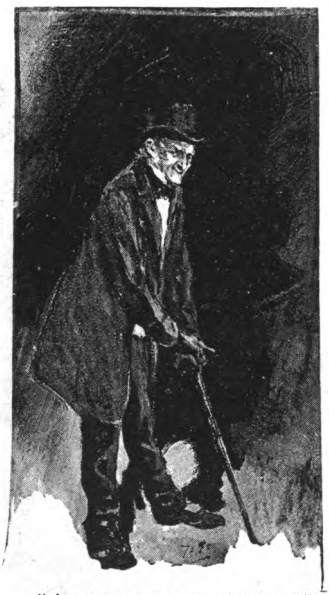
tone and manner I assumed that he must have been a pirate at the very least, and regarded him with awe, not unmingled with secret admiration.

Whatever it was, he had been saved from it by his wife, a bony lady of unprepossessing appearance, but irreproachable views.

One day he called at our house for some purpose or other, and, being left alone with him for a few minutes, I took the opportunity of interviewing him personally on the subject.

"You were very wicked once, weren't you?" I said, seeking by emphasis on the "once" to mitigate what I felt might be the disagreeable nature of the question.

To my intense surprise, a gleam of shameful glory lit up his wizened face, and a sound which I tried to think a sigh, but which sounded like a chuckle, escaped his lips.



"I'VE BEEN A BIT OF A SPANKER."

"Aye," he replied; "I've been a bit of a spanker in my time."

The term "spanker" in such connection puzzled me. I had been hitherto led to regard a spanker as an eminently conscientious person, especially where the shortcomings of other people were concerned; a person who laboured for the good of others. That the word could also be employed to designate a sinful party was a revelation to me.

"But you are good now, aren't you?" I continued, dismissing further reflection upon the etymology of "spanker" to a more fitting occasion.

"Aye, aye," he answered, his countenance resuming its customary aspect of resigned melancholy. "I be a brand plucked from the burning, I be. There beant much wrong wi' Deacon Sawyers, now."

"And it was your wife that made you good, wasn't it?" I persisted, determined, now that I had started this investigation, to obtain confirmation at first hand on all points.

With the mention of his wife his features became suddenly transformed. Glancing hurriedly round, to make sure, apparently, that no one but myself was within hearing, he leaned across and

hissed these words into my ear—I have never forgotten them, there was a ring of such evident sincerity about them—

"I'd like to skin her, I'd like to skin her alive."

It struck me, even in the light of my then limited judgment, as an unregenerate wish; and thus early my faith in the possibility of man's reformation received the first of those many blows that have resulted in shattering it.

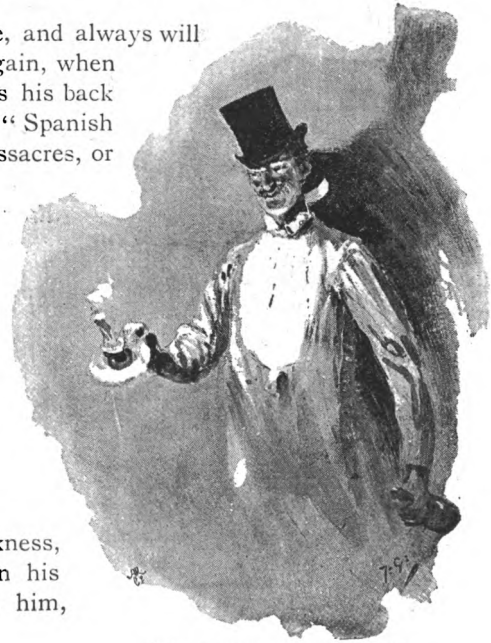
Nature, whether human or otherwise, was not made to be reformed. You can develop, you can check, but you cannot alter it.

You can take a small tiger and train it to sit on a hearthrug, and to lap milk, and so long as you provide it with hearthrugs to lie on and sufficient milk to drink it will purr and behave like an affectionate domestic pet. But it is a tiger, with all a tiger's instincts, and its progeny to the end of all time will be tigers.

In the same way, you can take an ape and develop it through a few thousand generations until it loses its tail and becomes an altogether superior ape. You can go on developing it through still a few more thousands of generations until it gathers to itself out of the floating vapours of eternity an intellect and a soul, by the aid of which it is enabled to keep the original apish nature more or less under control.

But the ape is still there, and always will be, and every now and again, when Constable Civilisation turns his back for a moment, as during "Spanish Furies," or September massacres, or Western mob rule, it creeps out and bites and tears at quivering flesh, or plunges its hairy arms elbow deep in blood, or dances round a burning nigger.

I knew a man once—or, rather, I knew of a man—who was a confirmed drunkard. He became and continued a drunkard, not through weakness, but through will. When his friends remonstrated with him,



"NEVER WENT TO BED SOBER."

he told them to mind their own business, and to let him mind his. If he saw any reason for not getting drunk he would give it up. Meanwhile he liked getting drunk, and he meant to get drunk as often as possible.

He went about it deliberately, and did it thoroughly. For nearly ten years, so it was reported, he never went to bed sober. This may be an exaggeration—it would be a singular report were it not—but it can be relied upon as sufficiently truthful for all practical purposes.

Then there came a day when he did see a reason for not getting drunk. He signed no pledge, he took no oath. He said, "I will never touch another drop of drink," and for twenty-six years he kept his word.

"CAME HOME AND CUT HIS THROAT."

At the end of that time a combination of circumstances occurred that made life troublesome to him, so that he desired to be rid of it altogether. He was a man accustomed, when he desired a thing within his reach, to stretch out his hand and take it. He reviewed the case calmly, and decided to commit suicide.

If the thing were to be done at all, it would be best, for reasons that if set forth would make this a long story, it should be done that very night, and, if possible, before eleven o'clock, which was the earliest hour a certain person could arrive from a certain place.

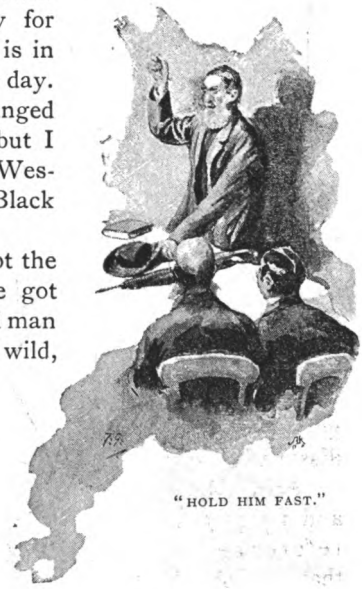
It was then four in the afternoon. He attended to some necessary business, and wrote some necessary letters. This occupied him until seven. He then called a cab and drove to a

small hotel in the suburbs, engaged a private room, and ordered up materials for the making of the particular punch that had been the last beverage he had got drunk on, six and twenty years ago.

For three hours he sat there drinking steadily, with his watch before him. At half-past ten he rang the bell, paid his bill, came home, and cut his throat.

For a quarter of a century people had been calling that man a "reformed character." His character had not reformed one jot. The craving for drink had never died. For twenty-six years he had, being a great man, held it gripped by the throat. When all things became a matter of indifference to him, he loosened his grasp, and the evil instinct rose up within him as strong on the day he died as on the day he forced it down.

That is all a man can do, pray for strength to crush down the evil that is in him, and to keep it held down day after day. I never hear washy talk about "changed characters" and "reformed natures" but I think of a sermon I once heard at a Wesleyan revivalist meeting in the Black Country.



"HOLD HIM FAST."

"Ah! my friends, we've all of us got the devil inside us. I've got him, you've got him," cried the preacher—he was an old man with long white hair and beard, and wild, fighting eyes. Most of the preachers who came "reviving," as it was called, through that district, had those eyes. Some of them needed "reviving" themselves, in a physical sense, before they got clear out of it. I am speaking of more than thirty years ago, now.

"Ah! so us have—so us have," came the response.

"And you carn't get rid of him," continued the speaker.

"Not of oursel's," ejaculated a fervent voice at the end of the room, "but the Lord will help us."

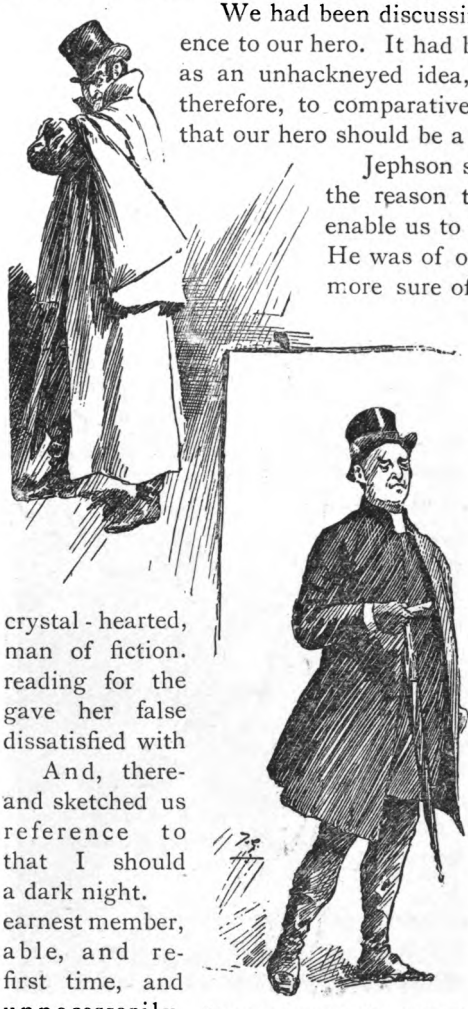
The old preacher turned on him almost fiercely:

"But th' Lord woan't," he shouted; "doan't 'ee reckon on that, lad. Ye've got him an' ye've got ta keep him. Ye carn't get rid of him. Th' Lord doan't mean 'ee to."

Here there broke forth murmurs of angry disapproval, but the old fellow went on, unheeding:

"It arn't good for 'ee to get rid of him. Ye've just got to hug him tight. Doan't let him go. Hold him fast, and—LAM INTO HIM. I tell 'ee it's good, healthy Christian exercise."

We had been discussing the subject with reference to our hero. It had been suggested by Brown as an unhackneyed idea, and one lending itself, therefore, to comparative freshness of treatment, that our hero should be a thorough-paced scamp.



"AN OUT AND OUT BLACKGUARD COMPLETELY REFORMED."

Jephson seconded the proposal, for the reason that it would the better enable us to accomplish artistic work. He was of opinion that we should be more sure of our ground in drawing a villain than in attempting to portray a good man.

crystal-hearted, man of fiction. reading for the gave her false dissatisfied with

MacShaugnassy thirded (if I may coin what has often appeared to me to be a much-needed word) the motion with ardour. He was tired, he said, of the noble-thinking young Besides, it made bad "young person." It ideas, and made her mankind as he really is. upon, he launched forth his idea of a hero, with whom I can only say not like to meet him on

And, thereand sketched us reference to that I should a dark night. earnest member, able, and refirst time, and unnecessarily, were for the business, not of talking nonsense.

Brown, our one begged us to be reasonminded us, not for the not, perhaps, altogether that these meetings purpose of discussing

Thus adjured, we attacked the subject conscientiously.

Brown's idea was that the man should be an out and out blackguard, until about the middle of the book, when some event

should transpire that would have the effect of completely reforming him. This naturally brought the discussion down to the question with which I have commenced this chapter: Does man ever reform? I argued in the negative, and gave the reasons for my disbelief much as I have set them forth here. MacShaugnassy, on the other hand, contended that he did, and instanced the case of himself—a man who, in his early days, so he asserted, had been a scatterbrained, impracticable person, entirely without stability.

I maintained that this was merely an example of enormous will-power enabling a man to overcome and rise superior to the defects of character with which nature had handicapped him.

"My opinion of you," I said, "is that you are naturally a hopelessly irresponsible, well-meaning ass. But," I continued quickly, seeing his hand reaching out towards a complete Shakespeare in one volume that lay upon the piano, "your mental capabilities are of such extraordinary power that you can disguise this fact, and make yourself appear a man of sense and wisdom."

Brown agreed with me that in MacShaugnassy's case, traces of the former disposition were clearly apparent, but pleaded that the illustration was an unfortunate one, and that it ought not to have weight in the discussion.

"Seriously speaking," said he, "don't you think that there are some experiences great enough to break up and re-form a man's nature?"

"To break up," I replied, "yes, but to re-form, no. Passing through a great experience may shatter a man, or it may strengthen a man, just as passing through a furnace may melt or purify metal, but no furnace ever lit upon this earth can change a bar of gold into a bar of lead, or a bar of lead into one of gold."

I asked Jephson what he thought. He did not consider the bar of gold simile a good one. He held that a man's character was not an immutable element. He likened it to a drug—poison or elixir—compounded by each man for himself from the pharmacopœia of all things known to life and time, and saw no impossibility, though some improbability, in the glass being flung aside and a fresh draught prepared with pain and labour.

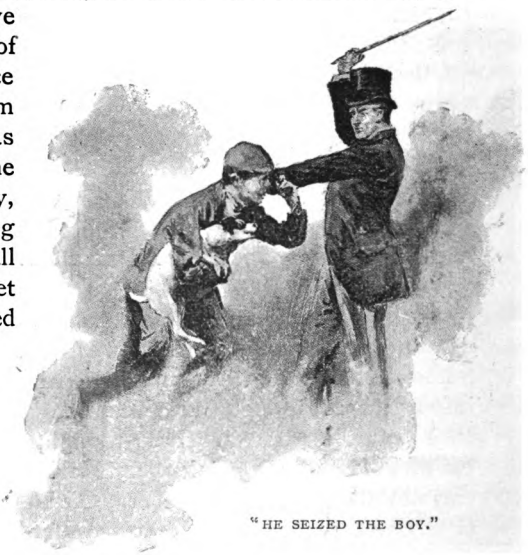
"Well," I said, "let us put the case practically; did you ever know a man's character to change?"

"Yes," he answered, "I did know a man whose character seemed to me to be completely changed by an experience that happened to him. It may, as you say, only have been that he

was shattered, or that the lesson may have taught him to keep his natural disposition ever under control. The result, in any case, was striking."

We asked him to give us the history of the case, and he did so.

"He was a friend of some cousins of mine," Jephson began, "people I used to see a good deal of in my undergraduate days. When I met him first he was a young fellow of twenty-six, strong mentally and physically, and of a stern and stubborn nature that those who liked him called masterful, and that those who disliked him—a more numerous body—termed tyrannical. When I saw him three years later, he was an old man of twenty-nine, gentle and yielding beyond the border-line of weakness, mistrustful of himself and considerate of others to a degree that was often unwise. Formerly, his anger had been a thing very easily and frequently aroused. Since the change of which I speak, I have never known the shade of anger to cross his face but once, and I think I am the only person who has seen even that. In the course of a walk, one day, we came upon a young rough terrifying a small child by pretending to set a dog at her. He seized the boy with a grip that almost choked him, and administered to him a punishment that seemed to me altogether out of proportion to the crime, brutal though it was.



"HE SEIZED THE BOY."

"I remonstrated with him when he rejoined me.

"'Yes,' he replied, apologetically; 'I suppose I'm a hard judge of some follies.' And, knowing what scene his haunted eyes were looking at, I said no more.

"He was junior partner in a large firm of tea brokers in the City. There was not much for him to do in the London office, and when, therefore, as the result of some mortgage transactions, a

South Indian tea plantation fell into the hands of the firm, it was suggested that he should go out and take the management of it. The plan suited him admirably. He was a man in every way qualified to lead a rough life; to face a by no means contemptible amount of difficulty and danger, to govern a small army of native workers more amenable to fear than to affection. Such a life, demanding thought and action, would afford his strong nature greater interest and enjoyment than he could ever hope to obtain amid the cramped surroundings of civilisation.

"SHE WAS A FRAGILE, DELICATE GIRL."

"Only one thing could in reason have been urged against the arrangement, that thing was his wife. She was a fragile, delicate girl, whom he had married in obedience to that instinct of attraction towards the opposite which Nature, for the purpose of maintaining her average, has implanted in our breasts—a timid, meek-eyed creature, one of those women to whom death is less terrible than danger, and fate easier to face than fear. Such women have been known to run screaming from a mouse and to meet martyrdom with heroism. They can no more keep their nerves from trembling than an aspen tree can stay the quivering of its leaves.

"That she was totally unfitted for, and would be made wretched by, the life to which his acceptance of the post would condemn her might have readily occurred to him had he stopped to consider her feelings in the matter at all. To view a question from any other standpoint than his own was not, however, his habit. That he loved her passionately, in his way, as a thing belonging to himself, there can be no doubt, but it was with the love that such men have for the dog they will thrash, the horse they will spur to a broken back. To consult her on the subject never entered his head. He informed her one day of his decision and of the date of their sailing, and, handing her a handsome cheque, told her to purchase all things necessary to her, and to let him know if she needed more; and she, loving him with a dog-like devotion that was not good for him, opened her big eyes a little wider, but said

A PAIR OF PIERCING EYES LOOKING OUT AT HER FROM A DUSKY FACE.

nothing. She thought much about the coming change to herself, however, and, when nobody was by, she would cry softly; then, hearing his footsteps, would hastily wipe away the traces of her tears, and go down to meet him with a smile.

"Now, her timidity and nervousness, which at home had been a butt for mere chaff, became, under the new circumstances of their life, a serious annoyance to the man. A woman who seemed unable to repress a scream whenever she turned and saw in the gloom a pair of piercing eyes looking out at her from a dusky face, who was liable to drop off her horse with fear at the sound of a wild beast's roar a mile off, and who would turn white and limp with horror at the mere sight of a snake, was not a companionable person to live with in the neighbourhood of Indian jungles.

"He himself was entirely without fear, and could not understand it. To him it was pure affectation. He had a muddled idea, common to men of his stamp, that women assume nervousness because they think it pretty and becoming to them, and that if one could only convince them of the folly of it they might be induced to lay it aside, in the same way that they lay aside mincing steps and simpering voices. A man who prided himself, as he did, upon his knowledge of horses, might, one would think, have grasped a truer notion of the nature of nervousness, which is a mere matter of temperament. But the man was in many respects a fool.

"The thing that appeared most absurd to him was her horror of snakes. He was unblessed—or uncursed, whichever you may prefer—with imagination of any kind. There was no special enmity between him and the seed of the serpent. A creature that crawled upon its belly was no more terrible to him than a creature that walked upon its legs; indeed, less so, for he knew that, as a rule, there was less danger to be apprehended from them. A reptile is only too eager at all times to escape from man. Unless attacked or frightened, it will make no onset. Most people are content to acquire their knowledge of this fact in natural history from the experience of others. He had proved it for himself. His servant, an old sergeant of dragoons, has told me that he has seen him stop with his face six inches from the head of a hooded cobra, and stand watching it through his eye-glass as it crawled away from him, knowing that one touch of its fangs would mean death from which there could be no possible escape. That any reasoning being should be inspired with terror—sicken-

ing, deadly terror—by such pitifully harmless things, seemed to him absurd, if not impossible; and he determined to try and cure her of her fear of them.

"He succeeded in doing this eventually somewhat more thoroughly than he had anticipated, but it left a terror in his own eyes that has not gone out of them to this day, and that never will.

"One evening, riding home through a part of the jungle not far from his bungalow, he heard a soft, low hiss close to his ear, and, looking up, saw a python swing itself from the branch of a tree and make off through the long grass. He had been out

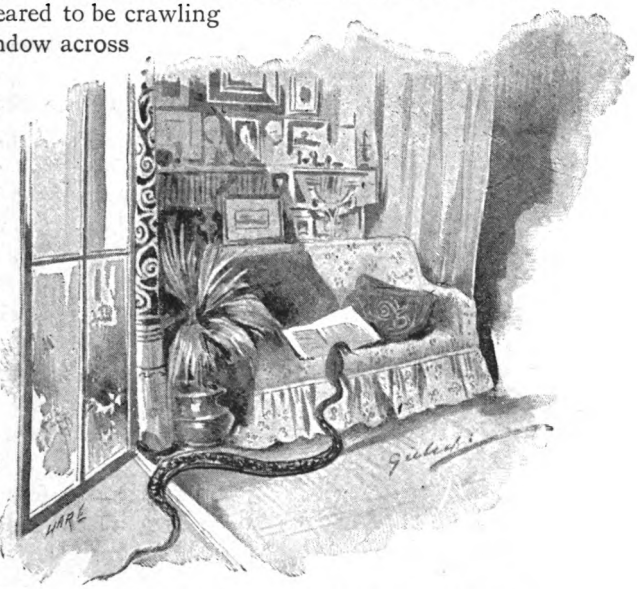
"RIDING ALONG, A BRILLIANT IDEA OCCURRED TO HIM."

antelope shooting, and his loaded rifle hung by his stirrup. Springing from the frightened horse, he was just in time to get a shot at the creature before it disappeared. He had hardly expected, under the circumstances, to even hit it. By chance the bullet struck it at the junction of the vertebræ with the head, and killed it instantly. It was a well-marked specimen, and, except for the small wound the bullet had made, quite uninjured. He picked it up, and hung it across the saddle, intending to take it home and preserve it.

"Riding along, glancing down every now and again at the huge, hideous thing swaying and writhing in front of him almost as if still alive, a brilliant idea occurred to him. He would use this

dead reptile to cure his wife of her fear of living ones. He would fix matters so that she should see it, and think it was alive, and be terrified by it; then he would show her that she had been frightened by a mere dead thing, and she would feel ashamed of herself, and be healed of her folly. It was the sort of idea that would occur to a fool.

"When he reached home, he took the dead snake into his smoking-room, then, locking the door, the idiot set out his prescription. He arranged the monster in a very natural and life-like position. It appeared to be crawling from the open window across the floor, and anyone coming into the room suddenly could hardly avoid treading on it. It was very cleverly done.



"HE ARRANGED THE MONSTER IN A VERY NATURAL AND LIFE-LIKE POSITION."

"That finished, he picked out a book from the shelves and opened it, and laid it face downward upon the couch. When he had completed all things to his satisfaction he unlocked the door and came out very pleased with himself.

"After dinner he lit a cigar and sat smoking it awhile in silence.

"'Are you feeling tired?' he said to her at length, with a smile.

"She laughed, and, calling him a lazy old thing, asked what it was he wanted.

"'Only my novel that I was reading. I left it in my den. Do you mind? You will find it open on the couch.'

"She sprang up and ran lightly to the door.

"As she paused there for a moment to look back at him and ask the name of the book, he thought how pretty and how sweet

she was; and for the first time a faint glimmer of the true nature of the thing he was doing forced itself into his brain.

"'Never mind,' he said, half rising, 'I'll—'; then, enamoured of the brilliancy of his plan, checked himself; and she was gone.

"He heard her footsteps passing along the matted passage, and smiled to himself. He thought the affair was going to be rather amusing. One finds it difficult to pity him even now when one thinks of it.

"The smoking-room door opened and closed, and he still sat gazing dreamily at the ash of his cigar, and smiling.

"One moment, perhaps two passed, but the time seemed much longer. The man blew the grey cloud from before his eyes and waited. Then he heard what he had been expecting to hear—a piercing shriek. Then another, which, expecting to hear the distant door clang to and her footsteps flying back along the passage, puzzled him. so that the smile died away from his lips.

"Then another, and another, and another, shriek after shriek.

"The native servant, gliding noiselessly about the room, laid down the thing that was in his hand and moved instinctively towards the door. The man started up and held him back.

"'Keep where you are,' he said hoarsely. 'It is nothing. Your mistress is frightened, that is all. She must learn to get over this folly.' Then he listened again, and the shrieks ended with what sounded curiously like a smothered laugh; and there came a sudden silence.

"And out of that bottomless silence, fear for the first time in his life came to the man, and he and the dusky servant looked at each other with eyes in which there was a strange likeness; and by a common instinct moved together towards the place where the silence came from.

"When the man opened the door he saw three things: one was the dead python, lying where he had left it; the second was a live python, its comrade apparently, slowly crawling round it; the third a crushed, bloody heap in the middle of the floor.

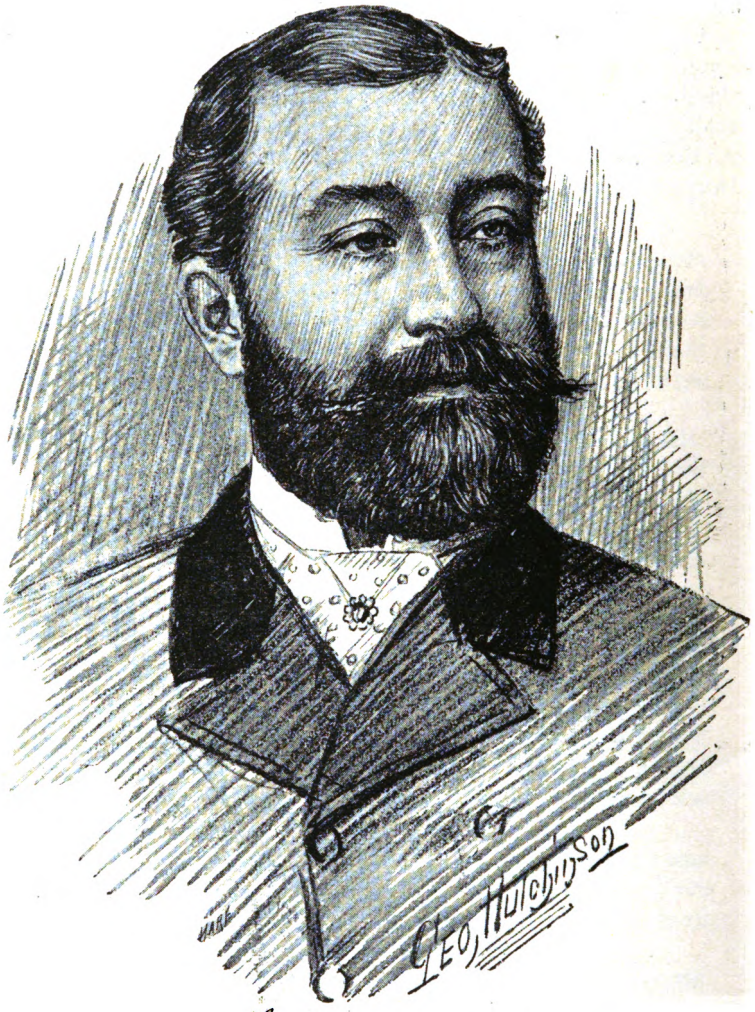
"He himself remembered nothing more until, weeks afterwards, he opened his eyes in a darkened, unfamiliar place, but the native servant, before he fled screaming from the house, saw his master fling himself upon the living serpent and grasp it with his hands, and when, later on, others burst into the room and caught him staggering in their arms, they found the second python with its head torn off.

"That is the incident that changed the character of my man—

if it be changed," concluded Jephson. "He told it to me one night as we sat on the deck of the steamer, returning from Bombay. He did not spare himself. He told me the story, much as I have told it to you, but in an even, monotonous tone, free from emotion of any kind. I asked him, when he had finished, how he could bear to recall it.

"'Recall it!' he replied, with a slight accent of surprise; 'it is always with me.'"

(To be continued.)



Very sincerely yours

Geo Hutchinson

My First Book.

THE SOCIAL KALEIDOSCOPE.

By Geo. R. Sims.

Illustrations by G. Hutchinson, Miss F. L. Fuller, and F. Sketchley.

12, CLARENCE TERRACE.

MY first book hardly deserved the title. I have only a dim remembrance of it now, because it is one of those things which I have studiously set myself to forget. I was very proud of it before I saw it. After I had seen it, I realised in one swift moment's anguish the concentrated truth of the word vanity as applied to human wishes. Hidden away in the bottom corner of an old box, which is not to be opened until after I am dead, that first book lies at the present moment; that is to say, unless the process of decay, which had already set in upon the paper on which it was printed, has gone on to the bitter end, and the book has disappeared entirely of its own accord.

Before that book was published, I used to lie awake at night and fancy how great and how grand a thing it would be for me to see a book with my name on the cover lying on Smith's bookstalls, and staring me in the face from the booksellers' windows. After it was published, I felt that I owed Messrs. Smith & Sons a deep debt of gratitude for refusing to take it, and my heart rejoiced within me greatly that the only booksellers who exhibited it lived principally in old back streets and half-finished suburban thoroughfares.

Stay—I will go up stairs to my lumber room, I will open that box, I will dig deep down among the buried memories of the past,

and I will find that book, and I will summon up my courage and ask the Editors of *The Idler* to kindly allow the cover of that book to be reproduced in this article. It is only by looking at it as I looked at it that you will thoroughly appreciate my feelings on the subject.

I have found the box, but my heart sinks within me as I try to open the lid. All my lost youth lies there. The key is rusty and will hardly turn in the lock.

So—so—so, at last! Ghosts of the long ago, come forth from your resting places and haunt me once again.

THE HALL.

Dear me, dear me, how musty everything smells, how old, and worn, and time-stained everything is. A folded poster:

"GRECIAN THEATRE.

"Mr. G. R. Sims will positively *not* appear this evening at the entertainment held in the Hall."

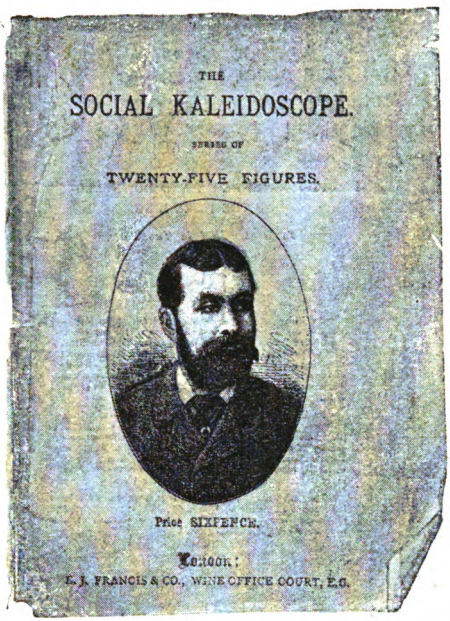
Yes, I remember. I had been announced, entirely without my consent or knowledge, to appear at a Hall attached to the Grecian Theatre with Mrs. Georgina Weldon, and take part in an entertainment. This notice was stuck about outside the theatre in

consequence of my indignant remonstrance. My old friend Mr. George Conquest had, I need hardly say, nothing to do with that bill. Someone had taken the Hall for a special occasion. I think it was something remotely connected with lunatics.

My first play! Poor little play—a burlesque written for my brothers and sisters, and played by us in the Theatre Royal Day Nursery. There were some really brilliant lines in it, I remember. They were taken bodily from a burlesque of H. J. Byron's, which I purchased at Lacy and Son's (now French's) in the Strand—"a new and original burlesque by Master G. R. Sims." My misguided parents actually had the playbill printed and invited friends to witness the performance. They little knew what they were doing by pandering to my boyish vanity in such a way. But for that printed playbill, and that public performance in my nursery, I might never have taken to the stage, and inflicted upon a long-suffering public Adelphi melodrama and Gaiety burlesque, farcical comedy and comic opera; I might have remained all my life an honest, hard-working City man, relieving my feelings occasionally by joining in the autumn discussions in the *Daily Telegraph*. I was still in the City when my first book was published. I used, in those days, to get to the City at nine and leave it at six, but I had a dinner hour, and in that dinner hour I wrote short stories and little things that I fancied were funny, and I used to put them in big envelopes and send them to the different magazines. I sent about twenty out in that way. I never had one accepted, but several returned.

THE SNUGGERY.

I wrote my first book in my dinner hour, in a City office. I

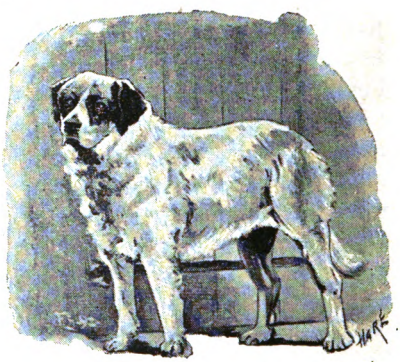


have just found it. Here is the cover. You will observe that it has my portrait on it. I look very ill and thin and haggard. That was, perhaps, the result of going without my dinner in order to devote myself to "literature."

If you could look inside that book, if you could see the paper on which it is printed, you would understand the shock it was to me when they laid it in my arms and said: "Behold your firstborn."

All the vanity in me (and they tell me that I have a good deal) rose up as I gazed at the battered wreck upon the cover—the man with the face that suggested a prompt subscription to a burial club.

But I shouldn't have minded that so much if the people who bought my book hadn't written to me personally to complain. One gentleman sent me a postcard to say that his volume fell to pieces while he was carrying it home. Another assured me that he had picked enough pieces of straw out of the leaves to make a bed for his horse with, and a third returned a copy to me without paying the postage, and asked me kindly to put it in *my* dustbin, because his cook was rather proud of the one he had in *his* back garden.



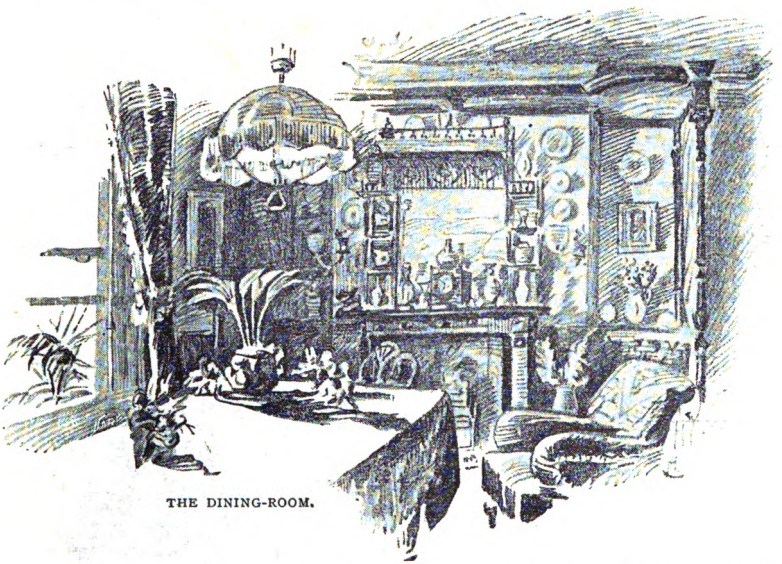
MR. SIMS'S "LITTLE DAWG."

Still the book sold (the sketches had all previously appeared in the *Weekly Dispatch*), and when the first edition was exhausted,

a new and better one was prepared (without that haggard face upon the cover), and I was happy. The sale ran into thirty thousand the first year of publication, and as I was fortunate enough to have published it on a royalty, I am glad to say it is still selling.

"The Social Kaleidoscope" was my first book. With it I made my actual *début* between covers.

I hadn't done very well before then; since then I have, from a worldly point of view, done remarkably well—far better than I deserved to do, my good-natured friends assure me, and I cordially agree with them.



THE DINING-ROOM.

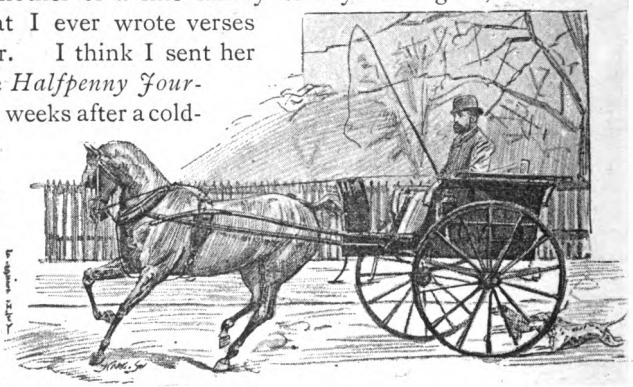
But I had made a good fight for it, and I had suffered years of disappointment and rebuff. I began to send contributions to periodicals when I was fourteen years old, and a boy at Hanwell College. *Fun* was the first journal I favoured with my effusions, and week after week I had a sinking at the heart as I bought that popular periodical and searched in vain for my comic verses, my humorous sketches, and my smart paragraphs.

It took me thirteen years to get something printed and paid for, but I succeeded at last, and it was *Fun*, my early love, that first took me by the hand. When I was on the staff of *Fun*, and its columns were open to me for all I cared to write, I used often to look over the batch of boyish efforts that littered the Editor's desk,

and let my heart go out to the writers who were suffering the pangs that I had known so well.

THE LIBRARY.

I had had effusions of mine printed before that, but I didn't get any money for them. I had the pleasure of seeing my signature more than once in the columns of certain theatrical journals, in the days when I was a constant first-nighter, and a determined upholder of the privileges of the pit. And I even had some of my poetry printed. In the old box to which I have gone in search of the first edition of my first book, there are two papers carefully preserved, because they were once my pride and glory. One is a copy of the *Halfpenny Journal*, and the other is a copy of the *Halfpenny Welcome Guest*. On the back page of the correspondence column of the former there is a poem signed "G.R.S.," addressed to a young lady's initials in affectionately-complimentary terms. Alas! I don't know what has become of that young lady. Probably she is married, and is the mother of a fine family of boys and girls, and has forgotten that I ever wrote verses in her honour. I think I sent her a copy of the *Halfpenny Journal*, but a few weeks after a coldness sprang up between us. She was behind the counter of a confectioner's shop in Camden Town, and I found her one afternoon giggling at a young friend of mine who used to buy his butterscotch there. My friend and I had words, but between myself and that fair confectioner "the rest was silence."

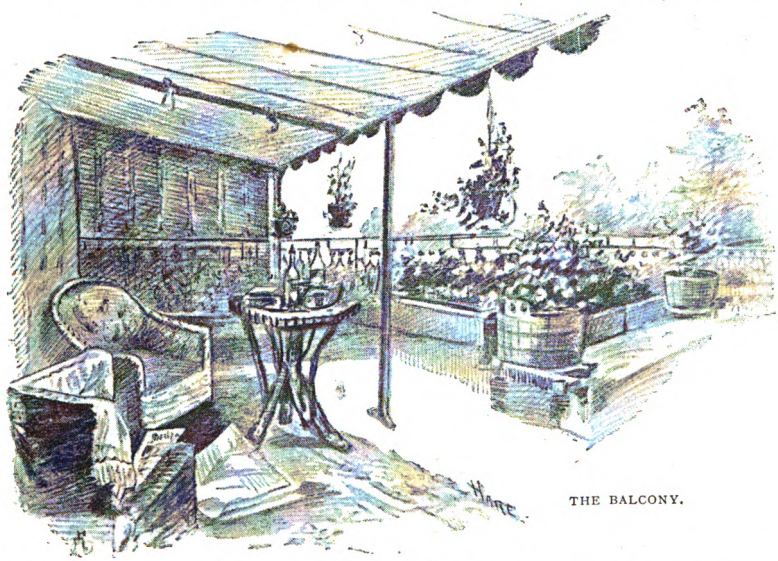


"SIR HUGO."

I was really very much distressed that my pride compelled me never again to cross the threshold of that establishment. There wasn't a confectioner's in all Camden Town that could come within measurable distance of it for strawberry ices.

In the correspondence column of the *Halfpenny Welcome Guest*, which is among my buried treasures, there is an "answer" instead of the poem which I had fondly hoped to see inserted in its glorious pages. And this is the answer: "G. R. S.—Your poem is not quite up to our standard, but it gives decided promise of better things. We should advise you to persevere."

I am quoting from memory, for after turning that box upside down, I can't lay my hand on this particular *Welcome Guest*, though I know that it is there. I don't know who the editor was who gave me that kindly pat on the head, but whoever he was



THE BALCONY.

he earned my undying gratitude. At the time I felt I should have liked him better had he printed my poem. I was no more fortunate with my prose than I was with my poetry. I began to tell stories at a very early age, but it was not until after I had succeeded in getting a poem printed among the "Answers to Correspondents" that I took seriously to prose with a view of publication. I was encouraged to try my hand at writing stories by the remembrance of the success which had attended my efforts at romantic narrative when I was a schoolboy.

There were eight other boys in the dormitory I slept in at Hanwell (the College, not the Asylum), and they used to make me tell them stories every night until they fell asleep, and woe betide me if I cut my narrative short while one of them remained awake. I wasn't much of a boy with a bolster or a boot, but they were all champions, and many a time when I had married the hero and heroine and wound up my story did I have to start a fresh complication in a hurry to save myself from chastisement. I remember on one occasion, when I was dreadfully sleepy, and I had got into a fearful fog as to who committed the murder, I made a wild plunge at a ghost to get me out of the difficulty, and the whole dormitory rose to a boy and set about me with bolsters in their indignation at such a lame and impotent conclusion.

Night after night did those maddening words, "Tell us a story," salute my ears as I laid my weary little head upon the pillow, and I had to tell one or run the gauntlet of eight bolsters and sixteen slippers, to say nothing of the biggest boy of all, who kept a reserve pair of boots hidden away under his bed for purposes not altogether unconnected with midnight excursions to a neighbouring orchard.

It was the remembrance of my early story-telling days that prompted me, when poetry seemed a drug in the market, to try my hand at what is now, I believe, called "The Complete Novelette."

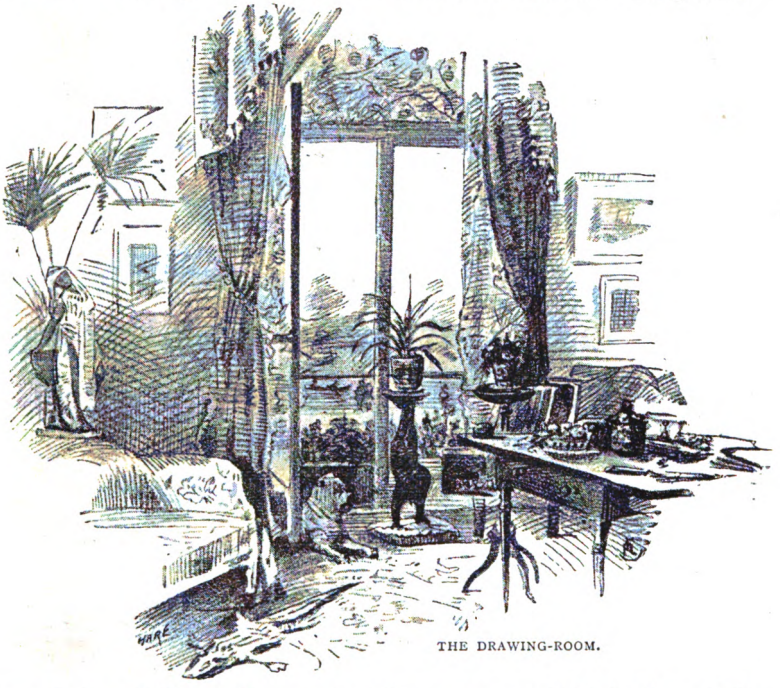
I set myself seriously to work, laid in a large stock of apples and jumbles, and spent several consecutive afternoons in completing a story which I called "A Pleasant Evening." After I had written it I copied it out in my best hand, and then, with fear and trembling, I sent it to the *Family Herald*.

I sent it to the *Family Herald* because I had heard a lady who visited at our house say that she knew a lady who knew a lady who had sent a story to the *Family Herald*, never having written anything before in her life, and the story had been accepted, and the writer had received five pounds for it by return of post.

I didn't receive anything by return of post, but in about a fortnight my manuscript came back to me. Nothing daunted, I

carefully cut off the corner on which "Declined with thanks" had been written, and I sent the story to *Chambers's Journal*. Here it met with a similar fate, but I fancy it took a little longer to come back, and it bore signs of wear and tear. I knew, or I had read, that it was not wise to let your manuscript have the appearance of being rejected, so I spent several unpleasant evenings in writing "A Pleasant Evening" out again, and I sent it to *All the Year Round*.

It came back! This time I didn't take the trouble to open it. I knew it directly I saw it, and as it reached me so I flung it in



THE DRAWING-ROOM.

my desk and bit my lips, and made up my mind that after all it was better to be accepted as a poet in the "Answers to Correspondents" column of the *Halfpenny Journal* than to be rejected as a story-writer by the editors of higher-priced periodicals.

But though I played with poetry again, I didn't even succeed in getting into the "Answers to Correspondents." My vaulting ambition o'erleaped its selle, and I sent my verses to journals which didn't "correspond." In those days I kept a little book, in which I entered all the manuscripts I sent to editors, and from

it now I copy the following instructive record. R stands for "Returned":—

Once a Week	...	"The Minstrel's Curse"	... R.
Belgravia	...	"After the Battle"	... R.
Broadway	...	"After the Battle"	... R.
Fun ...	...	"Nearer and Dearer"	... R.
Fun ...	...	"An Unfortunate Attachment"	... R.
Fun ...	...	"A Song of May"	... R.
Banter ...	...	"Nearer and Dearer"	... R.
Judy ...	...	"An Unfortunate Attachment"	... R.
London Society ...		"The Minstrel's Curse"	... R.
Owl ...	...	"Nearer and Dearer"	... R.

Returned! Returned! Returned! All I got for my pains was the chance of making a joke in my diary on my birthday. In those days of my wild struggles with Fate I find written against the 2nd of September, "Many unhappy Returns."

I believe that I should have flung up authorship in despair, and never have had a first book, but for the chance remark of the dear old doctor who looked after my health in the days when I hadn't to pay my own doctor's bills.

He was talking about me one day in my father's private office, and I happened to be passing, and I heard him say, "He's a nice lad, what a pity he scribbles." Scribbles! the word burnt itself into my brain, it seared my heart, it brought the hot blood to my cheeks, and the indignant tears to my eyes. Was I not ready to write an acrostic at a moment's notice on the name of the sweetheart of any fellow who asked me to do it? Had I not written a poem on the fall of Napoleon, which my eldest sister had read aloud to her schoolfellows, and made them all mad with jealousy to think there wasn't a brother among the lot of them who could even rhyme decently? Had I not had stories rejected by the *Family Herald*, *All the Year Round*, and *Chambers's Journal*, and a letter on the subject of the crossing opposite St. Mark's Church, Hamilton Terrace, printed in the *Marylebone Mercury?* And was I to be dubbed a scribbler, and pitied for my weakness! It is nearly twenty years since those words were uttered, and my dear old doctor rests beyond the reach of all human ills, but I can hear them now. They have never ceased to ring in my ears as they rang that day.

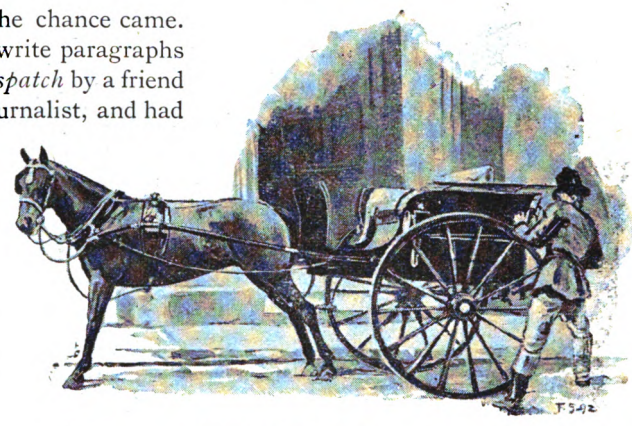
My pride was wounded, my vanity was hurt, I was put upon my mettle. I registered a silent vow there and then that some day I would have a noble revenge on my friendly detractor, and make

him confess that he was wrong when he said that it was a pity I scribbled.

From that hour I set myself steadily to be an author. I wrote poetry by the mile, prose by the acre, and I sent it to every kind of periodical that I could find in the Post Office Directory.

I had to pass through years of rejection, but still I wrote on, and still I spent all my pocket-money on books, and postage stamps, and paper.

And at last the chance came. I was allowed to write paragraphs in the *Weekly Dispatch* by a friend who was a real journalist, and had a column at his disposal to fill with gossip.



"FAUST UP TO DATE."

After doing the work for a month for nothing, I had the whole column given to me, and one day I received my first guinea earned by scribbling.

I was a proud man when I went out of the *Dispatch* office that day with a sovereign and a shilling in my hand. I had forced the gates of the citadel at last. I had marched in with the honours of war, and I was marching out with the price of victory in my hand.

Soon afterwards there came another chance. The Editor of the *Dispatch* wanted a series of short complete stories. I asked to be allowed to try if I could do them. Under the title of "The Social Kaleidoscope," I wrote a series of short stories or sketches, and from that day no week has passed that I have not contributed something to the columns of a weekly journal.

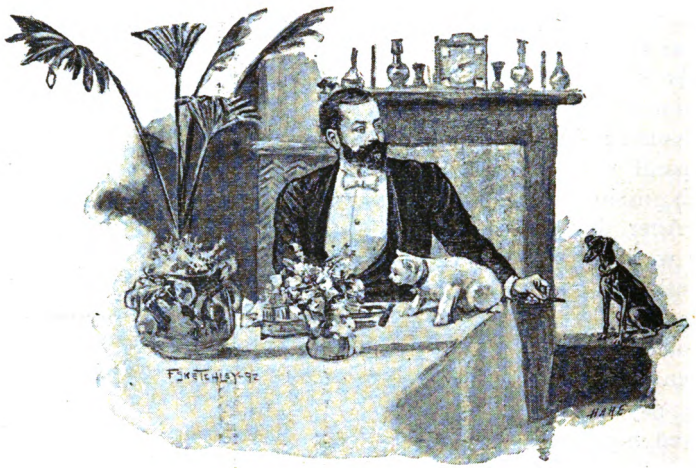
When the sketches were complete, the publisher of the *Dispatch* offered to bring them out in book form for me and publish them in the office.

"The Social Kaleidoscope" was my first book, and that is how it came into the world.

Years afterwards, my chance came with the dear old fellow who had said that it was a pity I scribbled so. Fortune had smiled upon me in one way then, and I was earning an excellent income with

my pen. But my health had broken down, and it was thought necessary that I should place myself in the hands of a celebrated surgeon. I had not seen my old doctor for some years, but my people wished that he should be consulted, because he had known me so well in the days of my youth.

So I submitted, and he came, and he shook his head and agreed that so and so was the man to take me in hand.



MR. SIMS'S DINNER PARTY.

"I think he'll cure you, my dear fellow," said the Doctor; "he's the most skilful surgeon we have for cases like yours, but his fee is a heavy one. Still you can afford it."

"Yes, Doctor," I replied, "thanks to my *scribbling*, I can."

That was the hour of my triumph. I had waited for it for fifteen years, but it had come at last.

The dear old boy gripped my hand. "I was wrong," he said, with a quiet smile, "and I confess it; but we'll get you well, and you shall scribble for many a year to come."

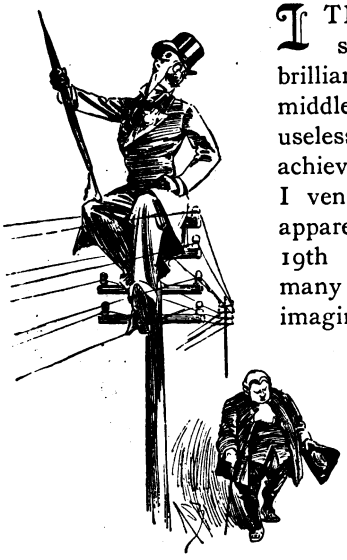
And I am scribbling still.

The Doom of London.

By Robert Barr.

Illustrations by A. S. Boyd.

I.—The Self-conceit of the 20th Century.



"WITH A CERTAIN CONDESCENSION."

I TRUST I am thankful my life has been spared until I have seen that most brilliant epoch of the world's history—the middle of the 20th century. It would be useless for any man to disparage the vast achievements of the past fifty years, and if I venture to call attention to the fact, now apparently forgotten, that the people of the 19th century succeeded in accomplishing many notable things, it must not be imagined that I intend thereby to discount in any measure the marvellous inventions of the present age. Men have always been somewhat prone to look with a certain condescension upon those who lived fifty or a hundred years before them. This seems to me the especial weakness of the present age; a feeling of national self-conceit, which, when it exists, should at least be kept as much in the background as possible. It will astonish many to know that such also was a failing of the people of the 19th century. They imagined themselves living in an age of progress, and while I am not foolish enough to attempt to prove that they did anything really worth recording, yet it must be admitted by any unprejudiced man of research that their inventions were at least stepping-stones to those of to-day. Although the telephone and telegraph, and all other electrical appliances, are now to be found only in our national museums, or in the private collections of those few men who take any interest in the doings of the last

century, nevertheless, the study of the now obsolete science of electricity led up to the recent discovery of vibratory ether which does the work of the world so satisfactorily. The people of the 19th century were not fools, and although I am well aware that this statement will be received with scorn where it attracts any attention whatever, yet who can say that the progress of the next half-century may not be as great as that of the one now ended, and that the people of the next century may not look upon us with the same contempt which we feel toward those who lived fifty years ago?

Being an old man, I am, perhaps, a laggard who dwells in the past rather than the present; still, it seems to me that such an article as that which appeared recently in *Blackwood* from the talented pen of Prof. Mowberry, of Oxford University, is utterly unjustifiable. Under the title of "Did the People of London Deserve their Fate?" he endeavours to show that the simultaneous blotting out of millions of human beings was a beneficial event, the good results of which we still enjoy. According to him, Londoners were so dull-witted and stupid, so incapable of improvement, so sodden in the vice of mere money-gathering, that nothing but their total extinction would have sufficed, and that, instead of being an appalling catastrophe, the doom of London was an unmixed blessing. In spite of the unanimous approval with which this article has been received by the press, I still maintain that such writing is uncalled for, and that there is something to be said for the London of the 19th century.

II.—Why London, Warned, was Unprepared.

The indignation I felt in first reading the article alluded to still remains with me, and it has caused me to write these words, giving some account of what I must still regard, in spite of the sneers of the present age, as the most terrible disaster that ever overtook a portion of the human race. I shall not endeavour to place before those who read any record of the achievements pertaining to the time in question. But I would like to say a few words about the alleged stupidity of the people of London in making no preparations for a disaster regarding which they had continual and ever-recurring warning. They have been compared with the inhabitants of Pompeii making merry at the foot of a volcano. In the first place, fogs were so common in London, especially in winter, that no particular attention was paid to them. They were merely looked upon as inconvenient annoyances, inter-

rupting traffic and prejudicial to health, but I doubt if anyone thought it possible for a fog to become one vast smothering mattress pressed down upon a whole metropolis, extinguishing life as if the city suffered from hopeless hydrophobia. I have read that victims bitten by mad dogs were formerly put out of their sufferings in that way, although I doubt much if such things were ever actually done, notwithstanding the charges of savage barbarity now made against the people of the 19th century.

"RAIN FREQUENTLY DESCENDED UPON LONDON."

Probably, the inhabitants of Pompeii were so accustomed to the eruptions of Vesuvius that they gave no thought to the possibility of their city being destroyed by a storm of ashes and an overflow of lava. Rain frequently descended upon London, and if a rainfall continued long enough it would certainly have flooded the metropolis, but no precautions were taken against a flood from the clouds. Why, then, should the people have been expected to prepare for a catastrophe from fog, such as there had never been any experience of in the world's history? The people of London were far from being the sluggish dolts present-day writers would have us believe.

III.—The Coincidence that Came at Last.

As fog has now been abolished both on sea and land, and as few of the present generation have even seen one, it may not be out of place to give a few lines on the subject of fogs in general, and the London fogs in particular, which through local peculiarities differed from all others. A fog was simply watery vapour rising from the marshy surface of the land or from the sea, or condensed into a cloud from the saturated atmosphere. In my day, fogs were a great danger at sea, for people then travelled by means of steamships that sailed upon the surface of the ocean.

London at the end of the 19th century consumed vast quantities of a soft bituminous coal for the purpose of heating rooms

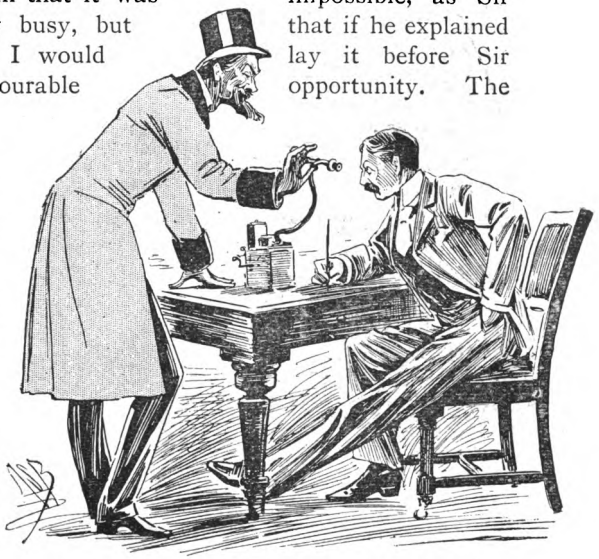
and of preparing food. In the morning and during the day, clouds of black smoke were poured forth from thousands of chimneys. When a mass of white vapour arose in the night these clouds of smoke fell upon the fog, pressing it down, filtering slowly through it, and adding to its density. The sun would have absorbed the fog but for the layer of smoke that lay thick above the vapour and prevented its rays reaching it. Once this condition of things prevailed, nothing could clear London but a breeze of wind from any direction. London frequently had a seven days' fog, and sometimes a seven days' calm, but these two conditions never coincided until the last year of the last century. The coincidence, as everyone knows, meant death—death so wholesale that no war the earth has ever seen left such slaughter behind it. To understand the situation, one has only to imagine the fog as taking the place of the ashes at Pompeii, and the coal-smoke as being the lava that covered it. The result to the inhabitants in both cases was exactly the same.

"CLOUDS OF BLACK SMOKE WERE POURED FORTH."

IV.—The American who Wanted to Sell.

I was at the time confidential clerk to the house of Fulton, Brixton & Co., a firm in Cannon Street, dealing largely in chemicals and chemical apparatus. Fulton I never knew; he died long before my time. Sir John Brixton was my chief, knighted, I believe, for services to his party, or because he was an official in the City during some royal progress through it; I have forgotten which. My small room was next to his large one, and my chief duty was to see that no one had an interview with Sir John unless he was an important man or had important business. Sir John was a difficult man to see, and a difficult man

to deal with when he was seen. He had little respect for most men's feelings, and none at all for mine. If I allowed a man to enter his room who should have been dealt with by one of the minor members of the company, Sir John made no effort to conceal his opinion of me. One day, in the autumn of the last year of the century, an American was shown into my room. Nothing would do but he must have an interview with Sir John Brixton. I told him that it was impossible, as Sir John was extremely busy, but that if he explained his business to me I would lay it before Sir John at the first favourable opportunity. The American demurred at this, but finally accepted the inevitable. He was the inventor, he said, of a machine that would revolutionise life in London, and he wanted Fulton, Brixton & Co. to become agents for it. The machine, which he had in a small handbag with him, was of white metal, and it was so construc ed that by turning an index it gave out greater or less volumes of oxygen gas. The gas, I understood, was stored in the interior in liquid form under great pressure, and would last, if I remember rightly, for six months without recharging. There was also a rubber tube with a mouthpiece attached to it, and the American said that if a man took a few whiffs a day he would experience beneficial results. Now, I knew there was not the slightest use in showing the machine to Sir John, because we dealt in old-established British apparatus, and never in any of the new-fangled Yankee inventions. Besides, Sir John had a prejudice against Americans, and I felt sure this man would exasperate him, as he was a most cadaverous specimen of the race, with high nasal tones, and a most deplorable pronunciation, much given to phrases savouring of slang; and he exhibited also a certain



"A MACHINE THAT WOULD REVOLUTIONISE LIFE."

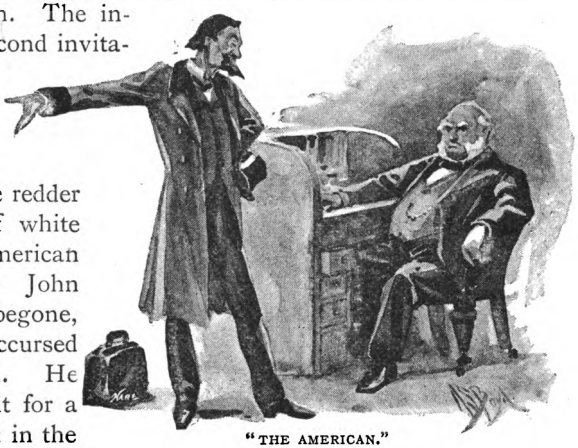
nervous familiarity of demeanour towards people to whom he was all but a complete stranger. It was impossible for me to allow such a man to enter the presence of Sir John Brixton, and when he returned some days later I explained to him, I hope with courtesy, that the head of the house regretted very much his inability to consider his proposal regarding the machine. The ardour of the American seemed in no way dampened by this rebuff. He said I could not have explained the possibilities of the apparatus properly to Sir John; he characterised it as a great invention, and said it meant a fortune to whoever obtained the agency for it. He hinted that other noted London houses were anxious to secure it, but for some reason not stated he preferred to deal with us. He left some printed pamphlets referring to the invention, and said he would call again.

"A NERVOUS FAMILIARITY OF DEMEANOUR."

V.—The American Sees Sir John.

Many a time I have since thought of that persistent American, and wondered whether he left London before the disaster, or was one of the unidentified thousands who were buried in unmarked graves. Little did Sir John think when he expelled him with some asperity from his presence, that he was turning away an offer of life, and that the heated words he used were, in reality, a sentence of death upon himself. For my own part, I regret that I lost my temper, and told the American his business methods did not commend themselves to me. Perhaps he did not feel the sting of this; indeed, I feel certain he did not, for, unknowingly, he saved my life. Be that as it may, he showed no resentment, but immediately asked me out to drink with him, an offer I was compelled to refuse. But I am getting ahead of my story. Indeed, being unaccustomed

to writing, it is difficult for me to set down events in their proper sequence. The American called upon me several times after I told him our house could not deal with him. He got into the habit of dropping in upon me unannounced, which I did not at all like, but I gave no instructions regarding his intrusions, because I had no idea of the extremes to which he was evidently prepared to go. One day, as he sat near my desk reading a paper, I was temporarily called from the room. When I returned I thought he had gone, taking his machine with him, but a moment later I was shocked to hear his high nasal tones in Sir John's room alternating with the deep notes of my chief's voice, which apparently exercised no such dread upon the American as upon those who were more accustomed to them. I at once entered the room, and was about to explain to Sir John that the American was there through no connivance of mine, when my chief asked me to be silent, and, turning to his visitor, requested him gruffly to proceed with his interesting narration. The inventor needed no second invitation, but went on with his glib talk, while Sir John's frown grew deeper, and his face became redder under his fringe of white hair. When the American had finished, Sir John roughly bade him begone, and take his accursed machine with him. He said it was an insult for a person with one foot in the grave to bring a so-called health invention to a robust man who never had a day's illness. I do not know why he listened so long to the American, when he had made up his mind from the first not to deal with him, unless it was to punish me for inadvertently allowing the stranger to enter. The interview distressed me exceedingly, as I stood there helpless, knowing Sir John was becoming more and more angry with every word the foreigner uttered, but, at last, I succeeded in drawing the inventor and his work into my own room and closing the door. I sincerely hoped I would never see the American again, and my wish was gratified. He insisted on



"THE AMERICAN."

setting his machine going, and placing it on a shelf in my room. He asked me to slip it into Sir John's room some foggy day and note the effect. The man said he would call again, but he never did.

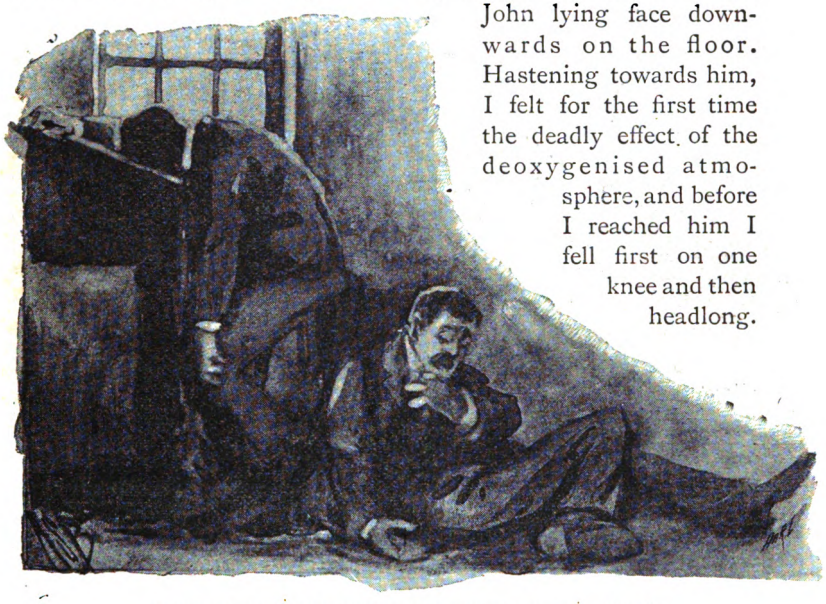
VI.—How the Smoke Held Down the Fog.

It was on a Friday that the fog came down upon us. The weather was very fine up to the middle of November that autumn. The fog did not seem to have anything unusual about it. I have seen many worse fogs than that appeared to be. As day followed day, however, the atmosphere became denser and darker, caused, I suppose, by the increasing volume of coal-smoke

"THE FOG CAME DOWN UPON US."

poured out upon it. The peculiarity about those seven days was the intense stillness of the air. We were, although we did not know it, under an air-proof canopy, and were slowly but surely exhausting the life-giving oxygen around us, and replacing it by poisonous carbonic acid gas. Scientific men have since showed that a simple mathematical calculation might have told us exactly when the last atom of oxygen would have been consumed; but it is easy to be wise after the event. The body of the greatest mathematician in England was found in the Strand. He came that morning from Cambridge. During a fog there was always a marked increase in the death rate, and on this occasion the increase was no greater than usual until the sixth day. The newspapers on the morning of the seventh were full of startling statistics, but at the time of going to press the full significance of the alarming figures was not realised. The editorials of the morning papers on the seventh

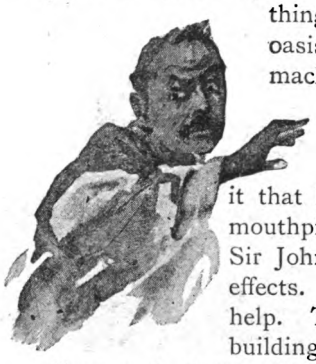
day contained no warning of the calamity that was so speedily to follow their appearance. I lived then at Ealing, a Western suburb of London, and came every morning to Cannon Street by a certain train. I had up to the sixth day experienced no inconvenience from the fog, and this was largely due, I am convinced, to the unnoticed operations of the American machine. On the fifth and sixth days Sir John did not come to the City, but he was in his office on the seventh. The door between his room and mine was closed. Shortly after ten o'clock I heard a cry in his room, followed by a heavy fall. I opened the door, and saw Sir John lying face downwards on the floor. Hastening towards him, I felt for the first time the deadly effect of the deoxygenised atmosphere, and before I reached him I fell first on one knee and then headlong.



"SOME OF THE CLERKS WERE MOTIONLESS ON THE FLOOR."

I realised that my senses were leaving me, and instinctively crawled back to my own room, where the oppression was at once lifted, and I stood again upon my feet, gasping. I closed the door of Sir John's room, thinking it filled with poisonous fumes, as, indeed, it was. I called loudly for help, but there was no answer. On opening the door to the main office I met again what I thought was the noxious vapour. Speedily as I closed the door, I was impressed by the intense silence of the usually busy office, and saw that some of the clerks were motionless on the floor, and others sat with their heads on their desks as if asleep.

Even at this awful moment I did not realise that what I saw was common to all London, and not, as I imagined, a local disaster, caused by the breaking of some carboys in our cellar. (It was filled with chemicals of every kind, of whose properties I was ignorant, dealing as I did with the accountant, and not the scientific side of our business.) I opened the only window in my room, and again shouted for help. The street was silent and dark in the ominously still fog, and what now froze me with horror was meeting the same deadly, stifling atmosphere that was in the rooms. In falling I brought down the window, and shut out the poisonous air. Again I revived, and slowly the true state of things began to dawn upon me. I was in an oasis of oxygen. I at once surmised that the machine on my shelf was responsible for the existence of this oasis in a vast desert of deadly gas. I took down the American's machine, fearful in moving it that I might stop its working. Taking the mouthpiece between my lips I again entered Sir John's room, this time without feeling any ill effects. My poor master was long beyond human help. There was evidently no one alive in the building except myself. Out in the street all was silent and dark. The gas was extinguished, but here and there in shops the incandescent lights were still weirdly burning, depending, as they did, on accumulators, and not on direct engine power. I turned automatically towards Cannon Street Station, knowing my way to it even if blindfolded, stumbling over bodies prone on the pavement, and in crossing the street I ran against a motionless 'bus, spectral in the fog, with dead horses lying in front, and their reins dangling from the nerveless hand of a dead driver. The ghostlike passengers, equally silent, sat bolt upright, or hung over the edge-boards in attitudes horribly grotesque.



VII.—The Train with its Trail of the Dead.

If a man's reasoning faculties were alert at such a time (I confess mine were dormant), he would have known there could be no trains at Cannon Street Station, for if there was not enough oxygen in the air to keep a man alive, or a gas-jet alight, there would certainly not be enough to enable an engine fire to burn, even if the engineer retained sufficient energy to attend to his task.

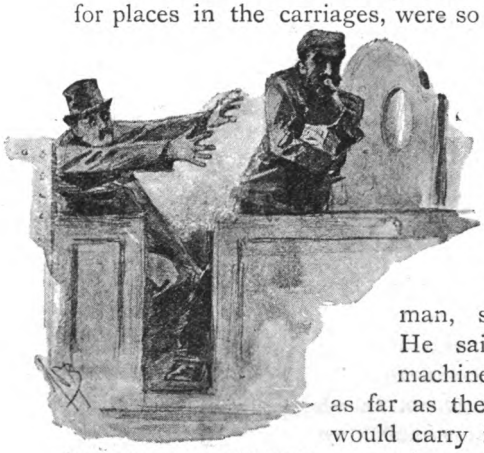
At times instinct is better than reason, and it proved so in this case. The railway in those days from Ealing came under the City in a deep tunnel. It would appear that in this underground passage the carbonic acid gas would first find a resting-place on account of its weight; but such was not the fact. I imagine that a current through the tunnel brought from the outlying districts a

"FOUGHT LIKE DEMONS."

supply of comparatively pure air that, for some minutes after the general disaster, maintained human life. Be this as it may, the long platforms of Cannon Street Underground Station presented a fearful spectacle. A train stood at the down platform. The electric lights burned fitfully. This platform was crowded with

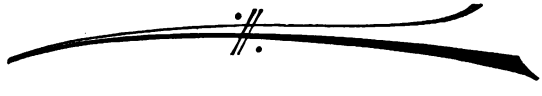
men, who fought each other like demons, apparently for no reason, because the train was already packed as full as it could hold. Hundreds were dead under foot, and every now and then a blast of foul air came along the tunnel, whereupon hundreds more would relax their grips, and succumb. Over their bodies the survivors fought, with continually thinning ranks. It seemed to me that most of those in the standing train were dead. Sometimes a desperate body of fighters climbed over those lying in heaps, and, throwing open a carriage door, hauled out passengers already in, and took their places, gasping. Those in the train offered no resistance, and lay motionless where they were flung, or rolled helplessly under the wheels of the train. I made my way along the wall as well as I could to the engine, wondering why the train did not go. The engineer lay on the floor of his cab, and the fires were out.

Custom is a curious thing. The struggling mob, fighting wildly for places in the carriages, were so accustomed to trains arriving and departing that it apparently occurred to none of them that the engineer was human and subject to the same atmospheric conditions as themselves. I placed the mouthpiece between his purple lips, and, holding my own breath like a submerged man, succeeded in reviving him. He said that if I gave him the machine he would take out the train as far as the steam already in the boiler would carry it. I refused to do this, but stepped on the engine with him, saying it would keep life in both of us until we got out into better air. In a surly manner he agreed to this and started the train, but he did not play fair. Each time he refused to give up the machine until I was in a fainting condition with holding in my breath, and, finally, he felled me to the floor of the cab. I imagine that the machine rolled off the train as I fell and that he jumped after it. The remarkable thing is that neither of us needed the machine, for I remember that just after we started I noticed through the open iron door that the engine fire suddenly became aglow again, although at the time I was in too



'HE REFUSED TO GIVE UP THE MACHINE."

great a state of bewilderment and horror to understand what it meant. A western gale had sprung up—an hour too late. Even before we left Cannon Street those who still survived were comparatively safe, for one hundred and sixty-seven persons were rescued from that fearful heap of dead on the platforms, although many died within a day or two after, and others never recovered their reason. When I regained my senses after the blow dealt by the engineer, I found myself alone, and the train speeding across the Thames near Kew. I tried to stop the engine, but did not succeed. However, in experimenting, I managed to turn on the air brake, which in some degree checked the train, and lessened the impact when the crash came at Richmond terminus. I sprang off on the platform before the engine reached the terminal buffers, and saw passing me like a nightmare the ghastly train-load of the dead. Most of the doors were swinging open, and every compartment was jammed full, although, as I afterwards learned, at each curve of the permanent way, or extra lurch of the train, bodies had fallen out all along the line. The smash at Richmond made no difference to the passengers. Besides myself, only two persons were taken alive from the train, and one of these, his clothes torn from his back in the struggle, was sent to an asylum, where he was never able to tell who he was; neither, as far as I know, did anyone ever claim him.

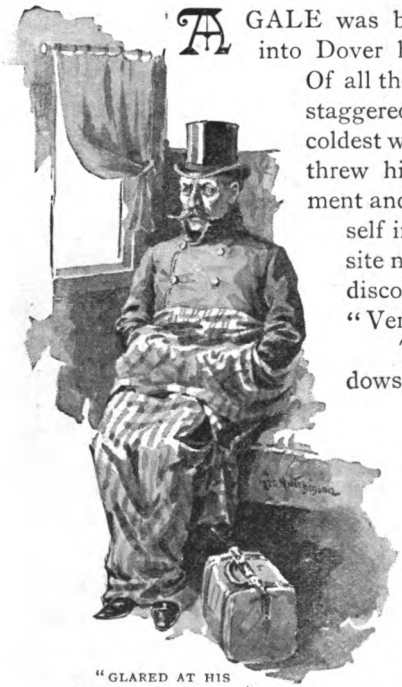


"Cupboard Love."

By "Do Bahin."

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.

CHAPTER I.



"GLARED AT HIS OPPOSITE NEIGHBOUR."

A GALE was blowing as the Calais packet ran into Dover harbour on an October afternoon. Of all the cold, wet, miserable mortals who staggered to the train, the wettest and coldest was the Hon. Augustus Jones, who threw himself into a first-class compartment and groaned aloud. He huddled himself in his rugs and glared at his opposite neighbour, who, however, in nowise disconcerted thereby, began cheerfully: "Very bad weather, sir!"

The rain dashed against the windows in violent gusts. The landscape was blotted out, and though it was still early in the afternoon darkness had already set in.

"It is a most vile climate," replied the Hon. Augustus, removing his gaze from his companion's red head to the blue cushion above it.

"Oh, I don't admit that. This certainly is a vile day for travelling; but the climate has its advantages."

"It is ten years," replied Mr. Jones, eyeing the advertisement of Smiths' soap, "since I had the misfortune to be in this country, and my memory furnishes me with no recollection of any advantages offered by its climate or people."

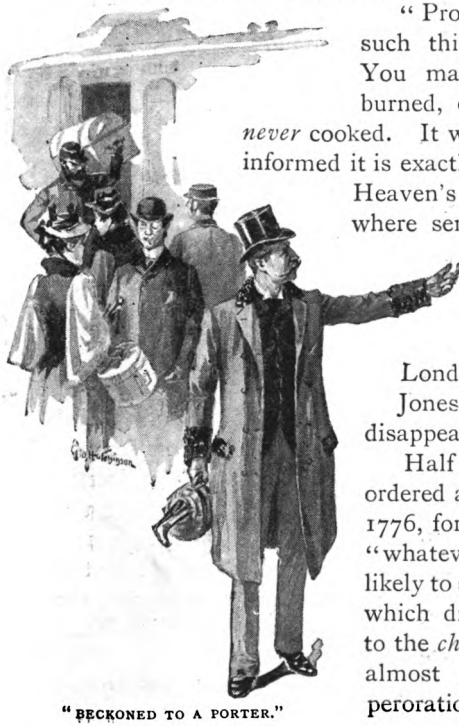
Mr. Jones's voice was deliberate and well pitched, but so modulated as to leave it doubtful whether his admirable pronunciation was or was not natural. Long training in the Diplomatic Service had possibly contributed to this peculiarity.

"What beastly bad luck you must have had," was the unruffled reply. "With good introductions there is no better society to be had than London offers."

Mr. Jones sat straight up, and, fixing his grey eyes indignantly on the young man, exclaimed: "Sir, I have the honour to belong to the Diplomatic Service, being one of the Secretaries to the British Embassy in Paris, and may reasonably be supposed to have had some experience of society. I consider that English society offers no advantages. It is dull, formal—and the dinners! *Grand Ciel*"—he stopped, evidently too much moved to proceed further.

The young man, with a twinkle in his eye, began: "Of course, we are not such professed cooks as the French——"

Mr. Jones did not allow him to finish that sentence.



"BECKONED TO A PORTER."

"Professed cooks! There is no such thing as cooking in England! You may get things more or less burned, or more or less sodden, but *never* cooked. It was so ten years ago, and I am informed it is exactly the same now; and how, in Heaven's name, I am to exist in a land where semi-raw butcher's meat is the chief article of diet I cannot imagine!"

As he spoke, the train slackened speed at the London terminus. The Hon. Mr. Jones beckoned to a porter, and disappeared in the crowd.

Half an hour later, dinner was ordered at the Hotel Métropole, in No. 1776, for a gentleman who would have "whatever the cook would be least likely to spoil!" Possibly this message, which drifted through several sources to the *chef*, was the cause of a dinner almost justifying Mr. Jones's late peroration.

* * * *

The next day was as bright, calm, and sunny as though autumn fogs and gales were things unknown. At half-past three the sun shone warm in the blue October sky, and the towers of Oxford rose from such masses of golden-red foliage as the gales of the two previous days had left clinging to the branches. Two men were walking slowly under the line of trees opposite Keble, which overarches the path outside the Parks. One was Mr. Jones, the other was the Rev. Stapleton Joye, Warden of Evangelists College. The contrast between them was marked, even to a casual observer. Augustus Jones was tall, and carried his sixty years lightly, his hair, never of a decided hue, showing but small signs of age. He possessed in a high degree that ease of carriage characteristic of his family, and for which his brother, the Canon of Christ Church, was noted in the University. The Warden of Evangelists was short and squarely built. He carried his grey head with its scanty locks and stubbly whiskers on one side, and grasped a short and thick umbrella, which was called by the irreverent "Mrs. Stapleton Joye," in recognition of his terror of the other sex. This almost inseparable companion he would wave wildly before him if excited; but it was more often clasped fondly to his breast, or used, as on this occasion, with the action of a canoe paddle to help him on his way. From his early undergraduate days he had been known by the name of "Killjoy Stapleton," and this title stuck to him amongst those who had been his contemporaries at college, and had been taken up by the Evangelists undergraduates, who found in it an ever novel joke. He was singularly unsuccessful as Warden, though a good and even pious man. He had a holy horror of manly sports and peccadilloes, and had, when tutor, condemned as a lost soul many a man who afterwards rose to high eminence in the Church. We are not, be it understood, asserting that the Warden was wrong. Augustus Jones was his oldest friend, and their intimacy could in no way be accounted for except by the fact that in both of them the sense of humour was completely wanting. There is no stronger bond for commonplace minds than an equal inability to appreciate the ludicrous.

"CLASPED FONDLY TO HIS BREAST."

The Warden was speaking hesitatingly and indistinctly. "So,

by the terms of the will, to inherit this property you must reside there?"

"Exactly so."

"Then why keep it if you hate the country so much? I fail to see——"

"My dear Stapleton," said his friend, "because necessity knows no law. I am not young; my private means are small. Mine is not a remunerative profession, and I cannot work with my new chief. Although my personal experience of the work is twice as great as his, he has actually given me a hint that I am not—that he does not—that I am, in short——"

"Dismissed!" groaned the Warden.

A slight spasm crossed the Secretary's face as he said hastily, "*Trop fort pour lui;* jealousy is the root of the matter!"

They had passed Wadham, and crossed the top of Broad Street. Suddenly the Warden's step slackened at the entrance to a narrow lane, bounded by high walls on either side. "You are going to Christ Church, of course?" he asked anxiously.

"Certainly, Edward expects you to dinner," said his friend.

"NEARLY KNOCKING OFF HIS FRIEND'S HAT."

"I really do not think I can face her, my dear Augustus," said the Warden, stopping short in his walk; "she quite alarms me! She comes to open the door, and looks at my boots in such a way, and scolds the page in a manner so upsetting to me, that I am positively afraid of the woman."

"Of what woman?"

"Of Miss Tebbs!"

"Miss Tebbs? Do try to be a trifle more lucid, Stapleton."

"Martha Tebbs the cook," said the Warden, nearly knocking off his friend's hat with his usual weapon.

"A most excellent cook," was the slow reply. "I lunched with Edward to-day, and the cutlets were irreproachable."

"She is a most formidable person."

"Such coffee I never thought to drink here, and the omelette was perfection."

"Her character is——"

"My dear Stapleton," said the Hon. Augustus contemptuously, "her character regards no one but Edward. If it is bad, *tant pis pour lui!*"

"Bad!" gasped the worthy Warden, horror-stricken, following his friend, who had quickened his steps towards Christ Church, "dear me, you are quite mistaken! She is a most respectable woman, and a member of Dr. Slope's elementary Bible Class. I sometimes examine that class myself."

"Indeed! Well, to-night you can examine Miss Tebbs's culinary powers," said his friend, turning aside through Peckwater into Tom Quad, and ringing the bell which hung by the side of the nearest door. The Warden retired behind his friend; his umbrella handle and anxious eyes under his shabby old hat appearing over the latter's shoulder. After a few moments' delay, the door was flung open, and a large, stout woman, with dark eyes and hair, appeared.

"I'm sorry you've been kept waiting, gentlemen," she said, in abrupt tones, "but I had to tie a clean apron on, and William is idling somewhere as usual."

"THE DOOR WAS FLUNG OPEN."

As the two men stepped into the hall, a small boy appeared, breathless, at the foot of the stairs. Martha turned savagely upon him. "So I'm to do your work as well as my own, am I? Show these gentlemen into the study."

The Hon. and Rev. Canon was seated in a cheerful room looking into Tom Quad, the walls covered with bookcases and pictures of Greek sculpture.

He was tall, like his brother, his little twinkling blue eyes and portly figure showing signs of full appreciation of the good things of this life, but, with his silver beard and hair, he seemed more than ten years Augustus's senior.

Tea was on the table, and he appeared relieved at the prompt arrival of his guests. "You are just in time," he said. "Martha's cakes must not be kept waiting." And he filled the cups from the

massive silver teapot, adding sugar and cream with a liberal hand. During the game of chess which followed, Augustus smoked several cigarettes, and sat thoughtfully gazing at the burning wood blazing in the open-tiled hearth. Dinner was served up at seven, and the Canon almost forgot his manners so far as to jostle the Warden on the stairs as that worthy man stopped and expatiated on the propriety of his last move in the game they had just left. Augustus maintained his silence during the whole evening; and soup, fish, *entrées* were served in almost judicial solemnity. When, however, a novel and exquisitely roasted dish of hare, accompanied by irreproachable vegetables, appeared, his enthusiasm burst the restraint he had evidently put upon it, and he exclaimed:

"*Pommes de terre sautées* and a new way of dividing a hare. Incredible!"

Next morning, on coming down to breakfast, and not finding his brother, the Canon rang for Billy, and ordered him to inform Mr. Jones that breakfast was getting cold.

"Mr. Jones is a waiting for you, sir," said Billy, very solemnly.

"Then where is he?"

"In the kitchen," said Billy, in awestruck tones.

"What is he doing there?" asked the Canon, in mild surprise, as he attacked the fish.

"I have been taking the liberty, my dear Edward, of showing your most admirable cook a new dish," said Augustus, entering the room with his usual deliberation, and taking a chair opposite to his brother.

"Very kind of you, I'm sure, Augustus," replied the Canon. "Martha will be much flattered."

"How long have you had her?"

"Eight years. Just a trifle too much cayenne, eh, Augustus?"

"I suppose she never thinks of leaving you?"

"Certainly not. Her wages are very high, and I should not suffer anyone to outbid me in that respect; her cooking is unique."

"It is," said Augustus.

"Leave me?" replied his brother, smiling gently as he began operations on some devilled bones. "Why she knows I should never refuse to raise her wages, and never consent to let her go. Boyson of Corpus dines here regularly once a week, and would refuse any other invitation for that day, so highly does he esteem her *petits diners*. Moreover, in my will, Martha is provided for with an annuity."

"Indeed," said the Hon. Augustus politely, "I will take a little more coffee, Edward."

"Besides," pursued the Canon, continuing the train of thought started by his brother, "I should refuse to give her a character."

"Indeed," said Augustus once more.

"THE HOUSEMAID."

CHAPTER II.

One morning, about a week after Augustus's visit terminated, the Canon was interrupted whilst dressing by a tap at the door, followed by the housemaid's voice, saying that Miss Tebbs had desired her to remind the Canon that there was an omelette for breakfast. This announcement always had the desired effect on her master. Five minutes later saw him in the dining-room. It was a most agreeable picture that met his eye. A dainty breakfast table, with shining silver and delicate china, and before his plate Martha's *chef d'œuvre*, the omelette. Martha's omelettes were certainly worthy of attention; they contained the very poetry of cooking.

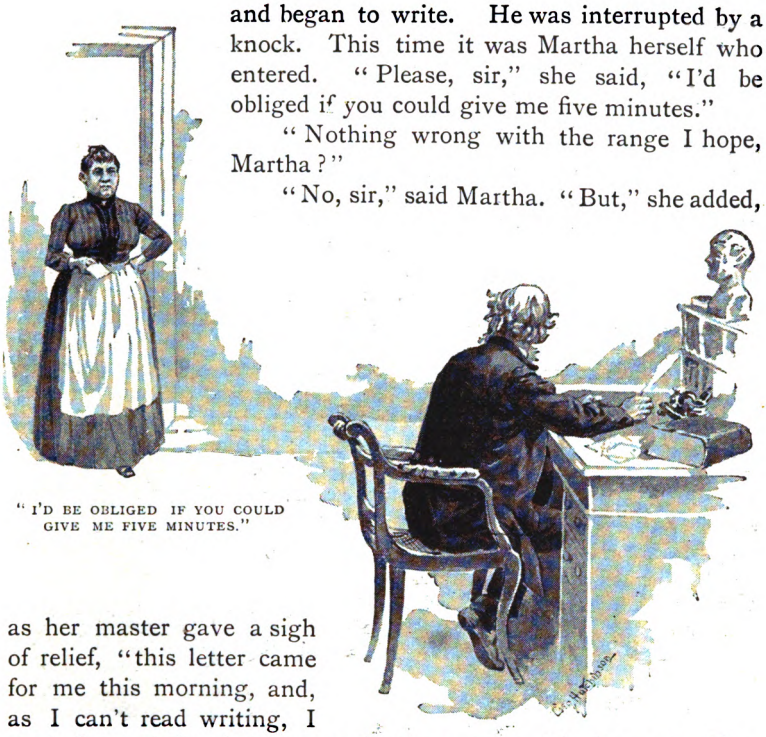
As the Canon seated himself at the table, he felt he was indeed a fortunate man, and his mind dwelt with approval on the subject of the celibacy of the clergy. "There can be," thought he, "no doubt but that a clergyman leads a higher life unmarried, especially if he has a good cook. His thoughts are untroubled, his temper untried, and his heart turned from those trivial matters that make up the sum of married life. And yet there was a time in my life when I actually contemplated matrimony. Fate was kind! Had I married, by this time my affection for my wife would have subsided into boredom; she would have ceased to take the same pains in ordering my dinner; she might even have quarrelled with Martha, and I should have lost the best cook in England. Besides, imagine children who spilt things at meals—how very unappetising! Undoubtedly celibacy is the better part."

These meditations occupied him until he had finished his breakfast and unfolded the newspaper. The Canon never read at meals; it distracted his attention too much. He went to the study

and began to write. He was interrupted by a knock. This time it was Martha herself who entered. "Please, sir," she said, "I'd be obliged if you could give me five minutes."

"Nothing wrong with the range I hope, Martha?"

"No, sir," said Martha. "But," she added,



"I'D BE OBLIGED IF YOU COULD GIVE ME FIVE MINUTES."

as her master gave a sigh of relief, "this letter came for me this morning, and, as I can't read writing, I made free to bring it to you, and ask you to read it for me." The Canon looked at the papers before him, and then he said, "If you will come back in half-an-hour, Martha, I shall have finished my letter and will attend to you.'

Martha laid down her letter and retired. The Canon continued writing for some minutes, when, suddenly turning his head, the direction on Martha's letter caught his eye. "Dear me!" he said, "how very singular. I could have declared that this was Augustus's handwriting. What can he have written to Martha about? It must be to ask for a recipe. Yes, that would be just like Augustus, he is so unprincipled. Well, I shall just read his letter now, and see if I choose Martha to give it; if it is the pigeons stuffed with anchovies, I shall not allow it." So saying, the Canon broke the seal and began to read the letter. His play of expression as he read it was remarkable. He first turned purple, and looked as if about to suffocate with rage, then he slowly grew livid, and a horror came over his face.

The letter was as follows:—

"Dear Miss Tebbs,—The sincere admiration which I entertain for your culinary talents, and the profound respect I feel for yourself, have moved me to address you in this letter for the purpose of submitting to you a proposal which I trust may be acceptable to you. Circumstances compel me to reside in England, and as a thorough connoisseur in matters of the table, I can assure you that yours is the only cooking I have ever known in this country which left nothing to be desired. I have recently inherited a small estate, and am many years younger than my brother, the Canon, whose heir I am. So accomplished an artiste as yourself will readily perceive that I am anxious to secure such services as yours permanently. I therefore, Madam, make you an offer of marriage on the following terms: I am prepared to settle upon you my property in case of my decease, to the amount of five hundred per annum, and to keep two kitchenmaids to assist you, or even three. In return, you will formally engage to continue to cook for me after our marriage, and will undertake honestly to expend the same amount of time and attention on your art as has characterised your efforts so far.

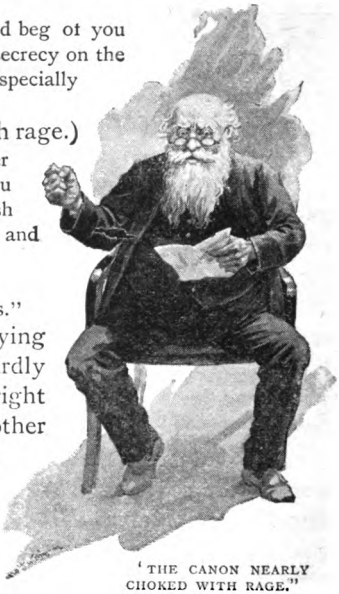
"May I request an immediate reply, and beg of you to do me the favour of preserving absolute secrecy on the subject of my proposal for the present, especially towards Canon Jones."

(Here the Canon nearly choked with rage.)

"Trusting, my dear Madam, that this offer may meet with your approval, and that you will enable me to face the prospect of English life with a confident reliance on your art and ability,

"I am, Madam, yours faithfully,

"AUGUSTUS JONES."



'THE CANON NEARLY CHOKED WITH RAGE."

"Well," exclaimed the Canon, laying the letter down, "of all the base, cowardly actions that deprived a man of the right to the title of gentleman, my brother has committed the worst! To come and stay with a relative, and insidiously wreck his domestic happiness! And how can I dare to hope that Martha will see this offer in its proper light, and will not be tempted to desert me? I am sure that I shall not live long deprived of Martha and her cooking!" Here the Canon sank into a despairing reverie on the subject of the probable loss of Martha which would have done credit to any schoolboy in the agonies of his earliest love affair. "And then," he exclaimed aloud, goaded by the horrible thought of plain boiled potatoes and underdone mutton, "I shall lose my prestige as the giver of the best dinners in Oxford. I can imagine Boyson saying to me, 'What a loss you had in Mrs.

Augustus Jones!' Why, no one will dine with me again! It will be as great a discredit as if I married her myself!" Here the Canon gave a slight start, gazed apprehensively round the room, and sank into a deep meditation.

"TERRIFIED THAT YOUTH."

After about a quarter of an hour, he rose from his chair with the air of a man who has taken some *desperate* resolution, and rang the bell. On Billy making his appearance, his master said, with a violence which terrified that youth, "Tell Miss Tebbs I want to speak to her immediately." The Canon waited in a state of deep agitation for Martha's appearance. When she entered, he began:

"Martha, you asked me to read you this letter. I fully expect" (with considerable emphasis) "that the contents will be as great a surprise to you as they are to me." He then proceeded to read the letter aloud. When he had finished he turned to her and said, "Now, Martha, are you going to desert me? I think I have made you fairly comfortable for eight years. I have never stinted you in butter or eggs. You have practically managed my household. I am willing to raise your wages to any amount you think proper. Surely, Martha, you would rather be respected in your own rank of life than occupy such a position as the despised wife of a selfish valetudinarian like Augustus Jones."

A terrible pause ensued. The beads of perspiration stood on the Canon's forehead.

Then Martha replied: "Please, sir, I've got myself to think of; and if Mr. Augustus thinks me fit for the situation, I'm not one to refuse a rise in life."

"Martha," said the Canon, "is this your final resolution?'

"Yes, sir," replied Martha, "and if you'll kindly put it down on paper for me, I'll be much obliged."

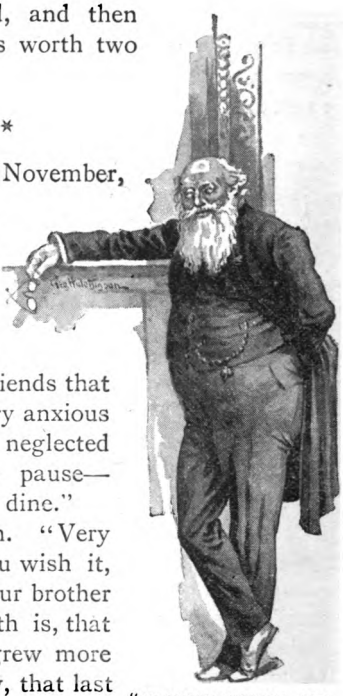
"Then," said her master, "I have one other suggestion to make to you, and I beg you will consider it before you attempt to reply. Martha, I cannot do without your cooking; I offer you the same terms as Mr. Jones, and I shall settle my fortune upon you, which is considerably larger than his—in short, Martha, you had better marry me."

Another fearful pause followed, and then Martha said: "A bird in the hand's worth two in the bush, so I'll take you."

* * * * *

On a cold day about the middle of November, the Warden of Evangelists was seated in his study arranging some papers, when Augustus Jones entered.

"Stapleton," he said, "I think it would be better to go and see Edward at once; he may hear to-day from friends that I am staying with you, and I am very anxious that he should not think that I have neglected him. Besides"—after a moment's pause—"I am sure he will wish to ask us to dine."



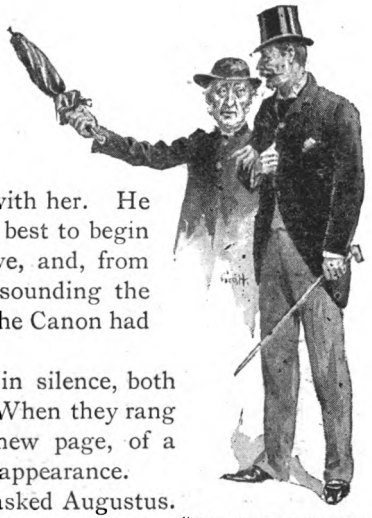
"IN SHORT, MARTHA, YOU HAD BETTER MARRY ME."

The Warden heaved a deep sigh. "Very good," he replied, "I will go if you wish it, though I have not been to see your brother since his return to Oxford. The truth is, that before he went away Miss Tebbs grew more overbearing than ever. Do you know, that last time I went to dine with your brother, I was five minutes late. I had lost my umbrella, and having a sort of idea it had been taken, I had it searched for, and that delayed me. Well, when I arrived, I found dinner had begun, and your brother, who is always remarkably courteous, explained to me that he was obliged to sit down at the exact moment dinner was ordered for, as Miss Tebbs was so much annoyed if the dinner was kept waiting. My dear Augustus, that woman is the most terrible of her sex!" and the Warden shuddered as he spoke. Then his face brightened. "We might go just at the time she is obliged to be cooking the dinner—then we couldn't meet her," he added.

"I sympathise with Miss Tebbs, Stapleton," said Augustus. "No woman of genius likes to see her greatest works wantonly spoiled; however, we will go about five o'clock, then Edward will give us some tea."

Five o'clock accordingly saw the two gentlemen setting out, equally agitated in their minds. Augustus was very anxious to establish a good footing at the Canon's house, as, in spite of the

totally unexpected refusal he had received, he had not by any means given up the idea of ultimately winning Martha; and he felt that, once more a visitor in his brother's house, ample opportunities would occur for interviews with her. He had thought, therefore, that it was best to begin by paying a visit to Stapleton Joye, and, from the safe harbour of Evangelists, sounding the state of affairs and discovering if the Canon had any suspicions.



"THE TWO GENTLEMEN SETTING OUT."

The two friends walked along in silence, both wrapped in thoughts of Martha. When they rang the bell, it was answered by a new page, of a more responsible age and smarter appearance.

"Is Canon Jones at home?" asked Augustus.

"No, sir, but Mrs. Jones is!"

"How strange," said Augustus, turning to the Warden—"it must be one of our cousins come on a visit!"

"I daresay it is Mrs. Thomas Jones," suggested his friend.

"Yes, it must be. I know she was planning a visit to Oxford. We will go up and see her."

"You don't expect *me* to come?" cried the wretched Stapleton Joye. "I will go home. Good-bye, my dear fellow!"

"Nonsense, Stapleton," said Augustus. "My brother is sure to be in soon; I insist on your coming up," and he dragged the Warden into the hall. "Mr. Jones and the Warden of Evangelists," said Augustus majestically, glaring at the unhappy Stapleton Joye. The page led them upstairs to the drawing-room, and, throwing open the door, announced them loudly. Augustus entered with his sweetest smile and outstretched hand.

"This is indeed a pleasant surprise——" he began, and then —"Martha!"

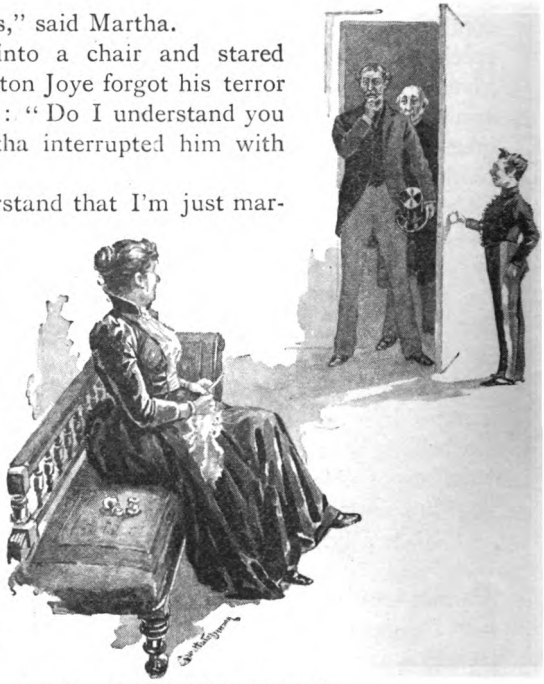
Martha was seated on the sofa in a gorgeous crimson velvet gown; she wore a gold necklace and had bracelets on each arm. A piece of elaborate fancy work and a smelling-bottle lay by her side. She also rose with a smile, but hers was the smile of triumph. "Very pleased to see you, Mr. Augustus," she said. "You're kindly welcome."

"Martha!" cried Augustus, "what is the meaning of this? I was told I should find Mrs. Jones here. Where is she? Will you tell her *at once* that I have come to see her?"

"*I* am Mrs. Jones," said Martha.

Augustus sank into a chair and stared wildly. Even Stapleton Joye forgot his terror in curiosity, and said: "Do I understand you to mean——" Martha interrupted him with some asperity:

"Can't you understand that I'm just married to Canon Jones? Three weeks ago by special license, and we didn't tell anyone, because the Canon said Mr. Augustus and others would be mightily unpleasant. We only came home the beginning of the week."



"MARTHA WAS SEATED ON THE SOFA."

The Warden simply fled!

That is to say, he rushed downstairs into the street. Then he found that he had left his umbrella behind him. He did *not* go back for it! That might be said to mark an era in his life.

Augustus was left sitting transfixed and rigid. Martha turned very graciously to him, and said:

"I hope you'll be staying to dinner?"

Under the Moonbeams.

By M. Babington Bayley.

Illustrations by Ernest Griset

Upon the snow-clad roof the moon
Performed a Mendelssohnnic tune;
Upon the snow-clad roof the cats
Together chorussed sharps and flats.

The number of the cats was four;
Entrancing was their vocal score;
Of this a lady 'neath the roof
Gave most unquestionable proof.

To deep obscurity the cats
Departed with their sharps and flats.
Upon the snow-clad roof the moon
Still played its Mendelssohnnic tune.

The Prodigal's Return.

By Frank Mathew.

Illustrations by F. Pegram.

AN old ruined Castle stands behind the sleepy village of Monkstown, by the River Lee. The ruins are covered with ivy, a wide park lies round them, and from one corner of the ramparts—where there is a white rose-bush, the last relic of the forsaken garden—you have a wonderful view of bright wooded country with the lazy river lounging through it. The village is clustered round a prim church, and the moated ramparts rise behind like a cliff.

"THEY WENT UP TO THEIR FAVOURITE MEETING-PLACE."

Kate Langrishe lives in Monkstown—you may meet her there any day; a quiet girl, with rather a noble face and with steady eyes—she leads a prosy life with her old bedridden mother. Some five years ago, Kate parted from her lover. He was one of those weak, well-meaning fellows it is an affliction to know. You could not keep from liking him, though you groaned to think what a fool he could be. Since he was poor, he went to Australia to make money. The day he started they strolled up to the Castle together for the last time. Their way passed the cool church,

and they went in. A big Bible lay on the reading-desk, and he suggested, half seriously, that they should each open the book at random to see if the texts they read first would tell their fortunes. I forget what text he read, but Kate opened the book at—

"When I found him whom my soul loveth,
I held him and would not let him go."

Then they went up to their favourite meeting-place where the white roses grow by the crumbling rampart. It was a bright April day, the sunshine gave a silver glimmer to the ivy on the ruins, and made the young leaves on the edges of the trees shine like gold.

He was in one of his absurdly bright moods—was always going from one extreme to the other, full of hope or of gloom—spoke of the great things he was going to do, for he intended to move the world. Kate listened to him, happy in his hopefulness, though in her heart she had doubts of his triumph. But what did that matter if only he did his best? Well, they said good-bye there, and she plucked a white rose from the bush and gave it to him, saying, "Keep the rose white, dear."

* * * *

He spent four years in Australia and made no money, was unchanged, was in scrapes again, he wished he had never left home. During this time his love for Kate lived, but it was "the desire of a moth for a star"—compatible with a weakness for candles—and the rose rotted in his desk. When he thought of her now it was with a new reverence, as he grew older he looked up to her simple goodness.

Often in the dry heat he longed for an hour at home, to breathe the fresh Irish air, to ramble with her through the green lanes, to drive on an outside car along those rough roads winding through the low hills. So, without warning anyone—for he had not the heart to write owning his failure—he came back nearly penniless, as a steerage passenger, to see Kate, to begin his life again. The worst of him was that he was always reforming, always beginning again, but never got beyond the beginning; he was as weak as water.

The ship reached Queenstown at night; he crossed the river and tramped across country to Monkstown through familiar fields. It was a damp grey night. In spite of all he was in high spirits, and sang to himself because he was home now and would see Kate; he laughed to think how surprised everyone would be.

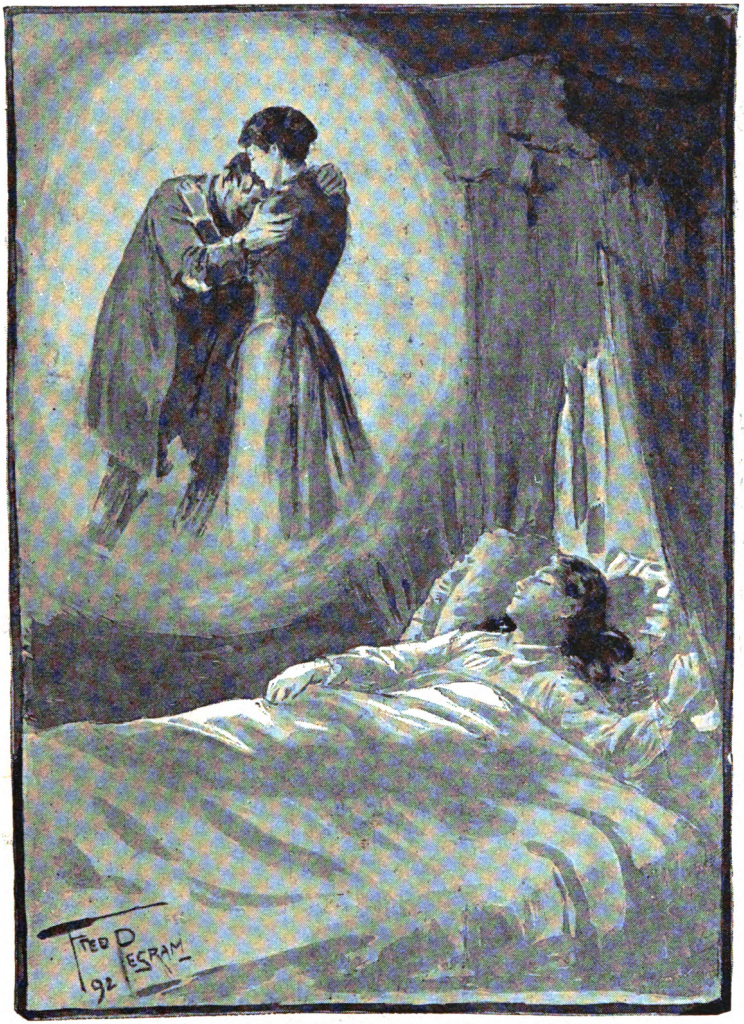
As he reached the village the watery dawn made the sky a lighter grey; he stopped under Kate's window and his heart fell. There was no light, no sign of life anywhere; this was a wretched home-coming. He walked up the street slowly and silently; the pavement was slippery, the street was clogged with mud, the Castle ramparts hung dimly over him in the twilight; he went up through the ivied gateway. The ruins and trees were black, the wind made a hissing noise in the branches. As he walked through the wet grass his heart was heavy as lead, the low sky seemed heavy as lead over him. He passed the white rose-bush—there were no buds on it—and standing in the old place leant on the shaky rampart.

"HE STOPPED UNDER KATE'S WINDOW."

Below him he saw the glossy roofs of the village, and closer the green moat, choked by nettles and dock-leaves and grass. The wet ivy struck a chill through him, he was very tired and felt dizzy, the moat seemed drawing him down to it. Then he felt in his breast pocket for the rose—he had brought it to show her he had not forgotten her words—he found it had fallen to pieces, there was nothing of it left but a bit of green stalk and some brown flakes; he looked at them for a moment, then flung them over the ramparts.

Suddenly he felt grown old and saw his whole life in darkness, it was horrible to look back upon. Now it seemed to him that he must have been mad at times; he cursed his own weakness, his useless struggles; if he had made no attempts at better things there would have been hope for him, his struggles to reform damned him. He was coming back to Kate—but what right had he to come? If he had been strong her love would have been his

reward. Surely he had never known her before, she seemed so infinitely above him; he could think of her only, the rest of the world was nothing to him, they two were alone in it. Now,



"IN A DREAM SHE SAW HIM COMING TO HER."

weaker than ever, failing hopelessly—what right had he to claim her? While he lived she would stand by him always, but for him to take her would be a cad's trick. Though he had been a fool, at least he was a gentleman.

Some lines of Swift's ran in his head:

"For such a fool was never found,
Who pulled a palace to the ground,
Only to have the ruins made
Materials for a house decayed."

He knew he would wreck her life in spite of his love of her; that was his history, loving the higher things, following the lower. This had gone on long enough; it was time there should be an end of it; he wished to God that he was dead. As he leant forward heavily on the old wall he felt it tottering and crumbling under him.

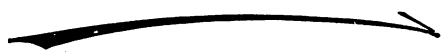
* * * *

Next day they found him lying face downwards in the moat among the dock-leaves and nettles, under a new gap where the rampart had fallen. No one recognised him, he was buried as a stranger in the village where he was born. All the wiseacres in Monkstown remembered they had always said the rampart would give way some day or other and kill somebody.

Kate is growing quite an old maid now, no one else remembers her love affair, it was over so long ago, but for her it is not over. She is sure he will come back to her yet, he is rising slowly, having a hard fight of it, but he is upright and honoured. Sometimes she sees him struggling and failing; after all he was only a weak boy, though so well-meaning. No matter how he fails, no matter how he has fallen, he is loyal to her still, he will come back to her some day.

In a dream she saw him coming to her, he was broken and degraded, his clothes were ragged, worn out he fell at her feet; she stretched out her trembling hands to him, took him in her arms, and held him like a mother holding a hurt child, saying:

"When I found him whom my soul loveth,
I held him and would not let him go."



I.

Where bluebells are tinkling a fairy tune
In the ear of sleeping night;
Where dewdrops laugh at the man in the moon,
And quiver with stolen light;
When the busy old world, that works by day,
Slumbers softly in dreamland far away—
'Tis then that we dance and sing and play,
Under the moon, the golden moon;
While bluebells are tinkling, tinkling, tinkling—
Bluebells are tinkling a fairy tune.

II.

Where Will-o'-the-wisp glides over the fen
To gaze upon fairy charms;
Where shadowy mists from the haunted glen
Are twining their silver arms;
Where winds of the night from afar can bring
The scent of the forest on silent wing—
'Tis there that we dance and play and sing,
Under the moon, the golden moon;
While bluebells are tinkling, tinkling, tinkling—
Bluebells are tinkling a fairy tune.

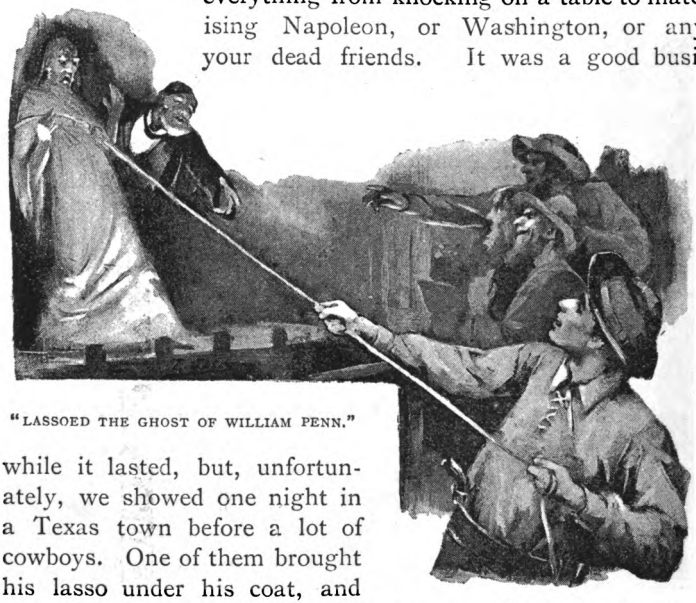
Told by the Colonel.

VII.

A MYSTERY.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. JACK.

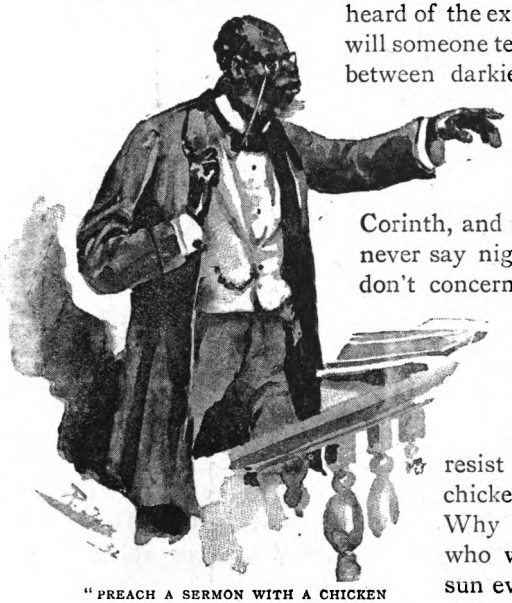
"DO I believe in spiritualism?" repeated the Colonel. "Well, you wouldn't ask me that question if you knew that I had been in the business myself. I once ran a 'Grand Spiritual Combination Show.' I had three first-class mediums, who did everything from knocking on a table to materialising Napoleon, or Washington, or any of your dead friends. It was a good business while it lasted, but, unfortunately, we showed one night in a Texas town before a lot of cowboys. One of them brought his lasso under his coat, and when the ghost of William Penn appeared the cowboy lassoed him, and hauled him in, hand over hand, for further investigation. The language William Penn used drove all the ladies out of the place, and his want of judgment in tackling the cowboy cost him all his front teeth. I and the other mediums, and the doorkeeper, had to take a hand in the manifestation, and the result was that the whole Combination was locked up overnight, and the fines that we had to pay made me tired of spiritualism.



"LASSOED THE GHOST OF WILLIAM PENN."

"No, sir! I don't believe in spiritualism, but for all that there are curious things in the world. Why is it that if a man's name is Charles G. Haseltine he will lose his right leg in a railway accident? The police some years ago wanted a

Charles G. Haseltine with a wooden right leg in the State of Massachusetts, and they found no less than five Charles G. Haseltines, and every one of them had lost his right leg in a railway accident. What makes it all the more curious is that they were no relation to one another, and not one of them had ever heard of the existence of the others. Then will someone tell me what is the connection between darkies and chickens? I say 'darkies' instead of 'niggers' because I had a coloured regiment on my right flank at the battle of Corinth, and that night I swore I would never say nigger again. However, that don't concern you. What I meant to say was that there is a connection between darkies and chickens which nobody has ever yet explained. Of course no darkey can resist the temptation to steal a chicken. Everybody knows that. Why I knew a coloured minister who was as honest a man as the sun ever tried to tan—and failed—and I have known him to preach a sermon with a chicken that he had lifted on his way to meeting shoved up under his vest. He wouldn't have stolen a dollar bill if he was starving, but he would steal every chicken that he could lay his hands on, no matter if his own chicken-house was crowded with chickens. It's in the blood—or the skin—and no darkey can help it.



"PREACH A SERMON WITH A CHICKEN UNDER HIS VEST."

"What was I going to say about the connection between darkies and chickens? I had very nearly forgotten it. This was what I was referring to. A chicken will draw a darkey, just as a dead sheep will draw vultures in Egypt, though there may have been no vultures within twenty miles when the sheep was killed. You may be living in a town where there isn't a single darkey within ten miles, but if you put up a chicken-house and stock it, there will be darkies in the town within twenty-four hours, and just so long as your chicken-house has a chicken in it fresh darkies will continue to arrive from all sections of the country. This

beats any trick that I ever saw a spiritual medium perform, and I can't see the explanation of it. You may say that someone carries word to the darkies that there is a new chicken-house waiting to be visited, but the answer to this is that it isn't true. My own idea is that it is a matter of instinct. When you carry a cat twenty miles away from home in a bag and let her out, we all know that her instinct will show her the way home again before you can get there yourself. Just in the same way instinct will draw a darkey to a chicken-house he has never seen or heard of. You'll say that to talk about instinct doesn't explain the matter. That is true enough, but it makes you feel as if you had struck the trail, which is some satisfaction at any rate. So far as I can see, that is about all that scientific theories ever do.

"If you care to listen I'll tell you what happened within my knowledge in connection with darkies and chickens. I was located a little after the war in the town of South Constantinople, in the western part of Illinois, and my next door neighbour was Colonel Ephraim J. Hickox, who commanded the 95th Rhode Island Regiment. The town was a growing place, and it had the peculiarity that there wasn't a darkey in it. The nearest one lived over at West Damascus, seven miles away, and there was only two of him, he and his wife. Another curious thing about the place was the scarcity of labour. There weren't above a dozen Irishmen in the place, and they wouldn't touch a spade or a hoe under three dollars a day, and wouldn't work more than four days in a week. You see a certain amount of digging and gardening had to be done, and there wasn't anybody to do it except these Irishmen, so they naturally made a good thing of it, working half the time, and holding meetings for the redemption of Ireland the rest of the time in the bar-room of the International Hotel.

"One day Colonel Ephraim, as I always used to call him, wanted to drain his pasture lot, and he hired the Irishmen to dig a ditch about a quarter of a mile long. They would dig for a day, and then they would knock off and attend to suffering Ireland, till Ephraim, who was a quick-tempered man, was kept in a chronic state of rage. He had no notion of going into politics, so he didn't care a straw what the Irishmen thought of him, and used to talk to them as free as if they couldn't vote. Why he actually refused to subscribe to a dynamite fund, and for a gold crown to be presented to Mr. Gladstone, and you can judge how popular he was in Irish circles. I used to go down to Ephraim's pasture every once in a while to see how his ditch was getting along, and

one afternoon I found the whole lot of Irishmen lying on the grass smoking instead of working, and Ephraim in the very act of discharging them.

"LYING ON THE GRASS, SMOKING."

"'Perhaps it's nagurs that you'd be preferring,' said one of the men, as they picked themselves up and made ready to leave.

"'You bet it is,' said Ephraim, 'and, what's more, I'll have that ditch finished by darkies before the week is out.' This seemed to amuse the Irishmen, for they went away in good spirits in spite of the language that had been hove at them, and it amused me too, for I knew that there were no darkies to be had, no matter what wages a man might be willing to pay. I said as much to Ephraim, who, instead of taking it kindly, grew madder than ever, and said, 'Colonel! I'll bet you fifty dollars that I'll have that ditch finished by darkies inside of four days, and that they'll do all the digging without charging me a dollar.'

"'If you're going to send over into Kentucky and import negro labour,' said I, 'you can do it, and get your ditch dug, but you'll have to pay either the darkies or the contractor who furnishes them.'

"'I promise you not to pay a dollar to anybody, contractor or nigger. And I won't ask anybody to send me a single man. What I'm betting on is that the darkies will come to my place of their own accord, and work for nothing. Are you going to take the bet, or ain't you?'

"I didn't hesitate any longer, but I took the bet, thinking that Ephraim's mind was failing, and that it was a Christian duty for his friends to see that if he did fool away his money, it should go into their pockets, instead of the pockets of outsiders. But, as you will see, Ephraim didn't lose that fifty dollars.

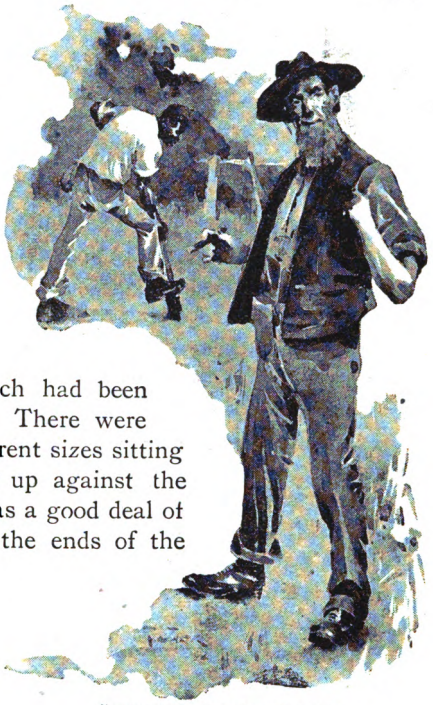
"Early the next morning Ephraim had a couple of masons employed in turning his brick smoke-house into a chicken-house, and he had two dozen chickens with their legs tied lying on the grass waiting for the chicken-house to be finished. The masons broke a hole through the side of the house, and lined it with steel rods about four feet long, which Ephraim had bought to use in some experiments in gun-making that he was always working at. The rods were set in a circle which was about a foot and a half wide at one end, and tapered to about four inches at the other end. The arrangement was just like the wire entrance to a mouse-trap of the sort that is meant to catch mice alive, and never does it. It was nothing less than a darkey-trap, although Ephraim pretended that it was a combined ventilator and front door for the chickens. The masons, so far as I could judge, thought that Ephraim's mind was going fast, and I made up my mind that it would be a sin to let the man bet with anybody who would be disposed to take advantage of his infirmity.

"'DUNNO!'"

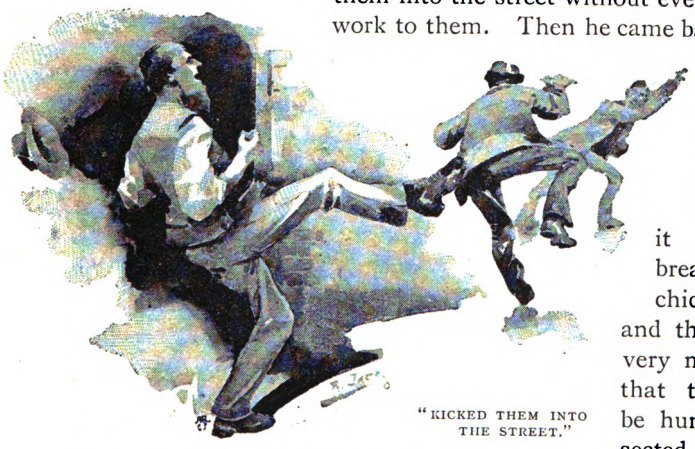
'The trap was finished before dark, and baited with two dozen young chickens. I came by the place a second time about sunset, just as Ephraim was locking up his chicken-house, and I saw a small darkey boy leaning on the fence. I asked him where he came from, but he only said 'Dunno.' I found out afterwards that he came from a house at least ten miles away, and that those two dozen chickens had drawn him there wasn't a shadow of doubt in my mind. At the time, however, I was a little afraid that Ephraim had begun to import coloured labour, and that there was some trick about his bet that might prove that his mind was all right. Two days afterwards I went down to the pasture, and found sixteen darkies digging away at that ditch, and Ephraim superintending with a twenty-five cent cigar in his mouth. 'Come to pay that fifty dollars, I suppose!' he said when he saw me. 'You can wait till the ditch is finished, which will be some time to-day. You see I was as good as my word.'

"I asked him to explain how he had collected his darkies, and being in unusually good spirits he told me all about it.

"He had made his trap just large enough to admit a good-sized darkey, who could push the steel rods apart as he crawled in, but who couldn't crawl out again, no matter how hard he might try. The morning after he had set the trap Ephraim took his shot-gun and went down to his chicken-house. He found that the night's catch had been larger than he had hoped. There were sixteen coloured men of different sizes sitting on the ground, or leaning up against the side of the house. There was a good deal of wool and cloth sticking to the ends of the steel rods, and some of the younger darkies looked as if they had been fighting with wild cats, but they didn't try to explain things. Besides the darkies, there were two white tramps in the trap, but Ephraim just kicked them into the street without even proposing work to them. Then he came back and told the darkies that the Legislature had just passed a bill making it felony to break into a chicken-house, and that he was very much afraid that they would be hung and dissected, unless they could show him some reason for being merciful to them.



"EPHRAIM SUPERINTENDING."



"KICKED THEM INTO THE STREET."

"The darkies were frightened, besides being hungry and cold, and when Ephraim said that he had a job of ditching to be done, and that if they would do it for him he would let them off scot free, they were delighted, and the whole chicken-house was lit up with their teeth. They went into that ditch a happy and contented gang, and finished it before night. Ephraim was a liberal man, and, considering that he had won fifty dollars, and had got his ditch finished for nothing, he was disposed to be generous. So he gave the darkies a lot of good advice, and informed them that, with a view of removing temptation from their way, he should sell his chickens and go out of the business. The darkies went away as happy as if they had been well paid, and the next morning there wasn't a darkey in the whole town. They had gone back to their homes, or else they had been drawn somewhere else by other chickens.

"Do I mean to say that Ephraim had not made arrangements with someone to send him those sixteen darkies? That is just what I do mean to say. When he fitted up his chicken-house he had no more idea where his darkies would come from than I had, but he knew that the chickens would draw darkies, and that his trap would hold them, so he felt that he had a sure thing. I have no more doubt that those darkies were drawn to Ephraim's place by those chickens than I have that a magnet will draw a needle. I can't explain how it was done, but I believe it all the same. It is what is called a mystery, and the good book says that the less you try to explain mysteries the better."

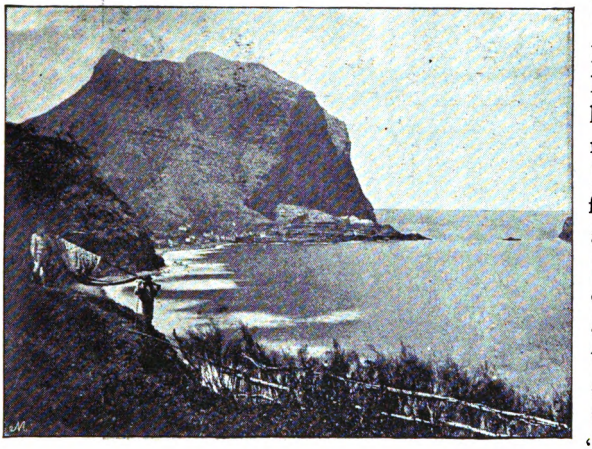
"GAVE THE DARKIES GOOD ADVICE.

Pleasant Winter Idling Places.

MADEIRA.

By T. H. Chance.

Illustrations by A. H. Fisher.

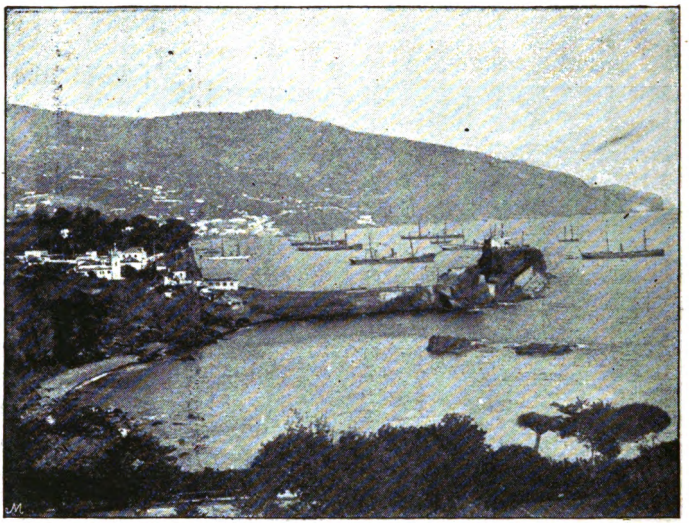


SANTA CRUZ.

UNTIL the inveterate Idler has been to Madeira, let him not flatter himself that he has mastered the alphabet of his profession. This lazy appanage of the lazy Portuguese is one of the most lovely, and certainly one of the most enervating, spots upon the universe. Tennyson's "Lotos-Eaters" were wrecked upon its southern strand, just after they had adopted *nem. con.* the resolution to toil no more. They came to grief because they would not take the trouble to keep off the rocks, and the skeleton of their little barque remains to this day, because the sea is too idle to wash it away. The north-east wind is bland and genial, and only blusters on rare occasions under uncommon provocation, so that what elsewhere would be a hurricane is only a breeze, and what might be a gale subsides into a zephyr. The fishermen allow their boats to drift out on the ebbing tide, and drop their nets in patient content, until the fish float into them for lack of animation to swim into safety. The flies alone are industrious. They are decidedly troublesome, and they perversely prefer to settle on the nose or some other prominent part of your anatomy; but the Madeira fly inserts his

sucker and calmly awaits the issue, trusting to the off chance that you will be too idle to brush him away, until he rolls off repleted. If Harry Paulton's "Lazy Society" still takes the trouble to exist, its members ought to make their annual excursion to this island of the blest; they could sleep out the voyage, forget to land, and doze on the beach until the steamer called to take them home again.

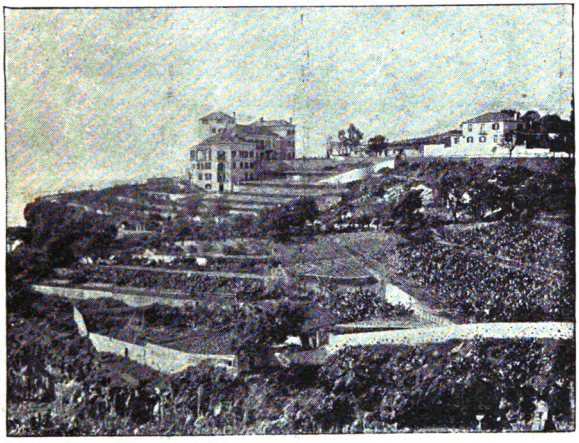
The Governor's residence is a veritable Castle of Indolence, leaning on the cliff that overlooks the harbour. The noon-day



"LOO ROCK."

gun is not fired by any active process, but goes off of its own accord when the meridian sun comes strolling that way, which curiously happens about once in four-and-twenty hours, though nobody has the energy to inquire the reason why. A breakwater got itself partially built some years ago to resist the advances of the restless encroaching sea, but native industry was not equal to the strain of properly mixing the mortar, so the sea-wall dropped in here and there, and nobody offers to mend it. Mount Church is a conspicuously charming spot in the centre of Funchal, much frequented by travellers. Its troublesome altitude of three hundred feet above sea-level makes access difficult, and a company was formed to construct a funicular railway; but this unique burst of energy exhausted itself and the subscribed funds at an

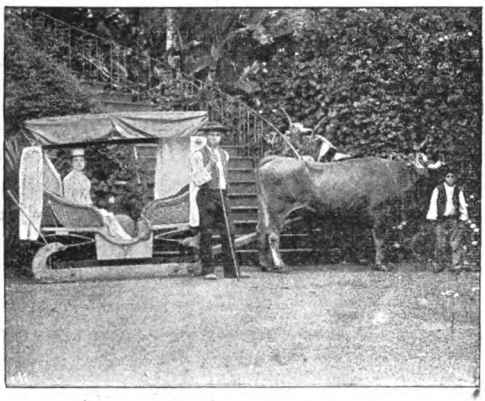
early stage, and the completion of this simple work is postponed until the English buy the island and utilise its many commercial possibilities. Although Funchal itself contains over thirty thousand inhabitants, they remain in the darkness visible revealed by a few oil lamps. The natives are quite alive to the superiority of gas as an illuminant, and a contract has actually been signed for erecting a gasometer. Nobody, however, supposes that the oldest inhabitant will live to witness the fruition of that enterprise. Sugar-cane is one of the chief agricultural products, but, instead of being used for its natural purpose, it is all crushed to make narcotic spirit. The official flag of Madeira bears as heraldic device five sugar-loaves; a whiskey-still would be more appropriate, and the more still the more appropriate.



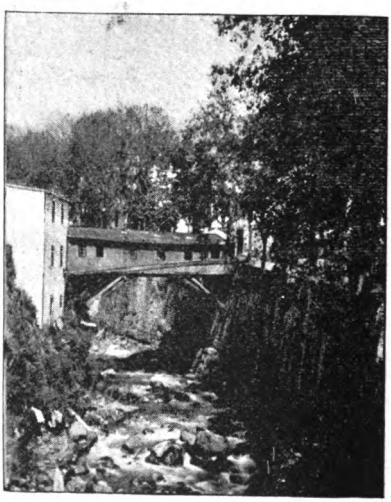
NEW HOTEL.

The fertile land is cut up into small holdings, and, as cultivation is primitive in its methods and profitable in its results, it might be supposed that the landlord would grow his own crops. The inertness of the race forbids such a reasonable course, so the owner allows another man to do the cultivation, and takes half the profit in shape of rent. The tenant drops in seed and plants at his leisure, and having tickled the soil with a hoe, sits down quietly and waits until it laughs into a harvest. Gorgeous flowers abound in wild luxuriance on every hand. They receive and require no special tendance, but grow of their own sweet will because they cannot help it. The rich foliage does not shoot—such violent action would be dead against the *genius loci*—the leaves just allow themselves to be drawn upwards by the sun, and the wanton air is perfumed with their sweetness. Even the more hardy trees do not take the trouble to shed their leaves at the approach of winter, but permit one season's growth to be gently pushed off as another's comes on.

Here nobody is ever in a hurry. An equable temperature goes with an equable temperament. The laws are easy so long as the heavy taxes are paid. Visitors grow restive under the exactions of the custom-house officers, who receive their slender salaries on condition that they squeeze as much as possible out of everybody. With charming equality this official blackmailing is exercised alike on permanent resident and casual sojourner. With this exception you can do pretty much as you please, only no tricks on the tax-collector. Even in this regard the *laisser aller* policy prevails. You are let alone on your arrival, and are only awakened to the stern necessity of paying your footing when you attempt to get away. It is a peculiarity of the Portuguese system that ingress is free. No passport is required by the visitor when he lands; but he must pay smartly for one before he departs, and has literally to buy official permission to leave the island. Thus, the Madeira officials may be said to "Welcome the coming, *bleed* the parting guest."



BULLOCK CARRO.



VAPOUR BRIDGE, FUNCHAL.

In this place of delicious inaction activity seems an offence as well as a nuisance. Wherever you find forty men, you will surely have two score of torpid livers. It is not surprising to find that even the local vernacular newspaper has but a languid circulation. That newspaper is an oddity. It does not run to cabling news as a rule, so most of its

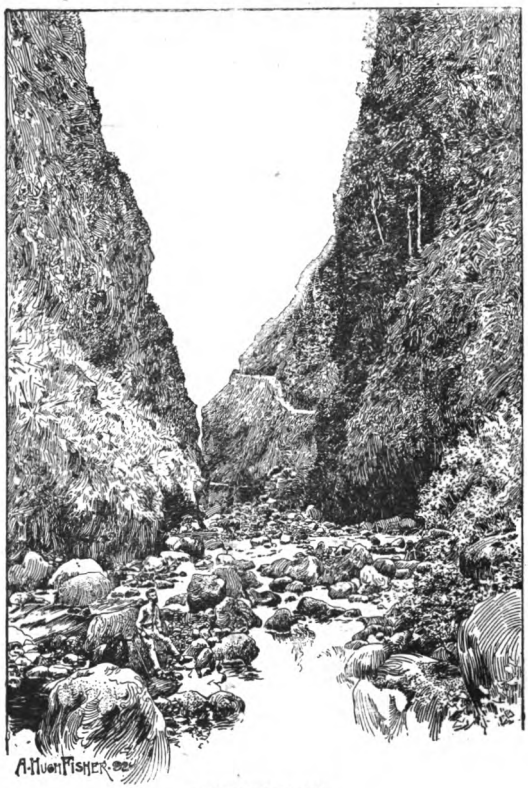
general information filters (slowly) through Lisbon, and is consequently not always exact. The advertisement columns are the most interesting. An English lady resident announces (in French) that a migraine will prevent her receiving her friends the following afternoon; a bereaved parent has the honour to announce that his son is dead, and that friends will be welcome to the funeral; a gentleman goes to the expense of advertising his felicitations on a friend's birthday. But one day the descriptive reporter achieved sublime heights in recording a charitable bazaar, attributing to Victor Hugo the Scriptural text, "*Qui donne aux pauvres prête à Dieu.*"

RIBIERO FRIO.

The name of the Deity was misspelt, perhaps from lack of familiarity; but that is a mere incident. In the English cemetery, where many young victims of consumption sleep amidst a rich luxuriance of flowers, are some strange and pathetic epitaphs. On the tombstone of a young girl one reads: "God lent her at Bombay," in such a year, and presently, "God claimed His own at Madeira."

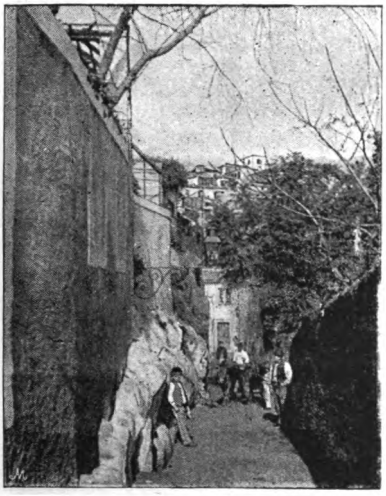
As Saint Lawrence is claimed as the patron saint of Idlers, one is not astonished to find the worship of his cult in full swing at Madeira. A public square is devoted to his memory, and Lourenço is a common Christian name. If visitors are at first inclined to marvel at the pervading and prevailing idleness, they

soon find the emotion too laborious to be sustained, and drop into placid recognition that all is for the best. With a good conscience and fair digestion, nothing is so delightfully congenial as "dreaming the happy hours away." Nature, as I have shown, does her gracious best to foster this tendency to somnolent content, and circumstance does the rest. At first your interest in home affairs makes you restless to get the English newspapers and letters. But this slackens when you find that the weekly mail brings news that is already nearly a fortnight old; and so admirable are the postal arrangements that the homeward mail generally closes a few hours before the outward mail brings your despatches. In consequence you resign all attempt to keep up your correspondence, and perhaps in the end nobody is much the worse. At the English rooms, temporary visitors are admitted to the advantages of the club on easy conditions. The literature in the news-room may have lost the bloom of absolute freshness, but the arm-chairs and couches are comfortable, and the soft lapping of the waves on the beach is a soothing incentive to an afternoon nap. If you endeavour to stimulate your ardour by conning the guide books, you find that they omit what you want to know, and weary the mind with uninteresting details. Tradition says that an emissary of the indefatigable Baedeker once visited the island, intending to do for Madeira what the German firm have done so well for Switzerland and Italy; but he succumbed to the



RIBIERO INFERNO.

all-controlling listlessness, and the red volume has never been read, because it has not been written.

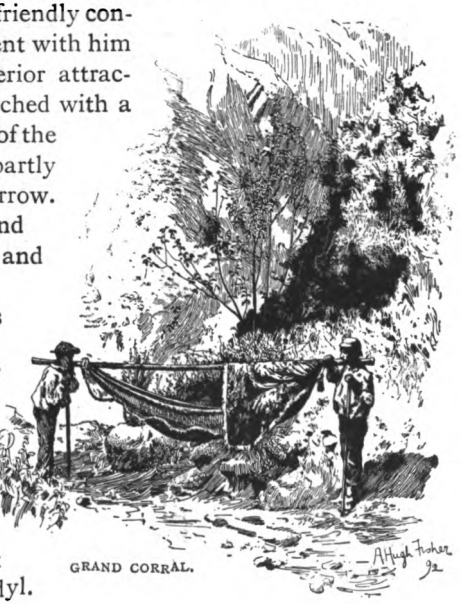


STREET IN FUNCHAL.

You may take it for granted that Madeira abounds with charming scenery. You can see some of it from a boat, which involves little trouble, or you can hear of it from the more enterprising travellers who are beguiled into taking expeditions to the mountains in hammocks borne by stalwart natives, or on the backs of horses so shod as to enable them to climb up steeps like the sides of a house, and warranted not to go more than three miles an hour. The majestic mountain frowns down upon you, sometimes with a grey cap of cloud set jauntily on his furrowed brow. You hear of the wooded heights, the mystic charm of deep ravines, the gorgeous glory of flower-spangled glades, and the exquisite music of trickling streams. The traveller who has explored the Grand Corral holds friendly controversy in the tobacco Parliament with him who would fain uphold the superior attractions of the Ribiero Frio. Touched with a tepid desire to see the scenic lions of the island, you lie in the shade and partly plan an excursion for the morrow. But to-morrow never comes; and

"Enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action."

And so it comes about that what was intended to be a graphic description of my "Loiter in Lazy-land" tones down into a languid plea for letting it alone. It suffices the Idler to know that a sojourn in Madeira is one long Idyl.



GRAND CORRAL.

The American Claimant.

By Mark Twain.

Illustrations by Hal Hurst.

CHAPTER XIX.

SHE had made everything comfortable for the artist; there was no further pretext for staying. So she said she would go now. She went away unhappy, and she left unhappiness behind her. The time dragged heavily for both now. Never before had painting seemed so empty to him; never before had millinerizing seemed so void of interest to her. She had gone without repeating that dinner-invitation—an almost unendurable disappointment to

"SHE WENT AWAY."

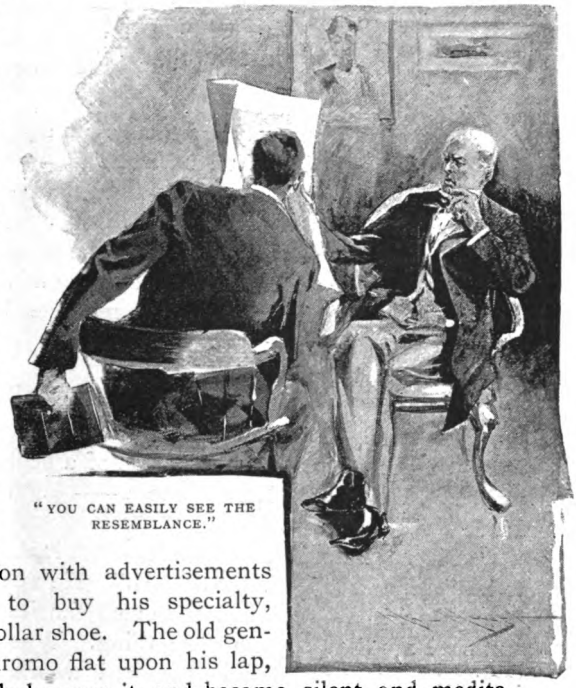
him. On her part—well, she was suffering, too; for she had found she *couldn't* invite him. It was not hard yesterday, but it was impossible to-day.

She got some peace of mind by sending word to the Thompsons, in the neighborhood, that she was coming there to dinner. She wouldn't be reminded, at that table, that there was an absentee who ought to be a presentee.

About this time the old earl dropped in for a chat with the artist, and invited him to stay to dinner. Tracy cramped down his joy and gratitude by a sudden and powerful exercise of all his forces; and he felt that now that he was going to be close to Gwendolen, and hear her voice and watch her face during several precious hours, earth had nothing valuable to add to his life for the present.

The earl said to himself, "This spectre can eat apples, apparently. We shall find out, now, if that is a specialty."

Sellers said he was pleased with Tracy's work; and said he should also want him to paint his portrait and his wife's, and possibly his daughter's. The tide of the artist's happiness was at flood, now. The chat flowed pleasantly along, while Tracy painted and Sellers unpacked a picture which he had brought with him. It was a chromo; a new one, just out. It was the smirking, self-satisfied portrait of a man who was inundating the Union with advertisements inviting everybody to buy his specialty, which was a three-dollar shoe. The old gentleman rested the chromo flat upon his lap, and gazed down tenderly upon it, and became silent and meditative. Presently Tracy noticed that he was dripping tears on it. This touched the young fellow's sympathetic nature, and at the same time gave him the painful sense of being an intruder upon a sacred privacy, an observer of emotions which a stranger ought not to witness. But his pity rose superior to other considerations, and compelled him to try to comfort the old mourner. He said—



"YOU CAN EASILY SEE THE RESEMBLANCE."

"I am very sorry—is it a friend whom——"

"Ah, more than that—a relative, the dearest I had on earth,

although I was never permitted to see him. Yes, it is young Lord Berkeley, who perished so heroically in the awful confla—why, what is the matter ?"

"Oh, nothing. It is a little startling to be so suddenly brought face to face, so to speak, with a person one has heard so much talk about. Is it a good likeness ?"

"Without doubt, yes. I never saw him, but you can easily see the resemblance to his father," said Sellers, holding up the chromo and glancing from it to the chromo misrepresenting the Usurping Earl and back again with an approving eye.

"Well, no—I am not sure that I make out the likeness. The Usurping Earl there has a great deal of character and a long face like a horse's, whereas his heir here is moon-faced and characterless."

"We are all that way in the beginning—all the line," said Sellers, undisturbed. "We all start as moon-faced fools, then later we tadpole along into horse-faced marvels of intellect. All our family are fools at first."

"This young man seems to meet the hereditary requirements."

"Yes, yes, he was a fool, without any doubt. Fool is printed all over the face. A body can even read the details."

"What do they say ?"

"Well, added up, he is a wobbler

"A which ?"

"Wobbler. A person that's always taking a firm stand about something or other, and then, inside of a little while, he begins to wobble. That's Lord Berkeley to a—— But—you are blushing. Have I offended in some way ?"

"Oh, no, indeed. Far from it. But it always makes me blush to hear a man revile his own blood." He said to himself: "How strangely his vagrant and unguided fancies have hit upon the truth. I am that contemptible thing. When I left England, I thought I knew myself; I thought I was a very Frederick the Great for resolution and staying capacity, whereas, in truth, I am just a wobbler." Then he said, aloud: "Could this fool, as you call him, breed a great and self-sacrificing idea in his head, do you think ? Could he meditate such a thing, for instance, as the renunciation of the earldom, and voluntary retirement to the ranks of the commonalty, there to rise by his own merit, or remain for ever poor and obscure ?"

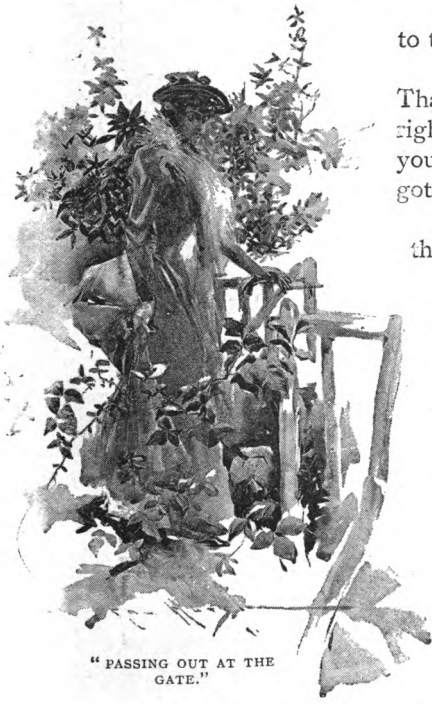
"Could he ? Why, look at him—look at this simpering, self-righteous mug. There is your answer. It's the very thing he

would think of. And he would start in to do it, too. Why—— "Heigh-ho! where are you going, dear?"

"Out to dinner, papa."

Tracy was aghast. The Colonel said, in a disappointed voice—

"Well, I'm sorry. Sho, I didn't know she was going out, Mr. Tracy." Gwendolen's face began to take on a sort of apprehensive what-have-I-done expression. "Three old people to one young one—well, it isn't a good team, that's a fact." Gwendolen's face betrayed a dawning hopefulness, and she said—with a tone of reluctance which hadn't the hall-mark on it—



"PASSING OUT AT THE GATE."

"If you prefer, I will send word to the Thompsons that I——"

"Oh, is it the Thompsons? That simplifies it—sets everything right. We can fix it without spoiling your arrangements, my child. You've got your heart set on——"

"But, papa, I'd *just* as soon go there some other——"

"No, I won't have it. You are a good, hard-working, darling child, and your father is not the man to disappoint you when you——"

"But, papa, I——"

"Go along, I won't hear a word. We'll get along, dear."

Gwendolen was ready to cry with vexation. But there was nothing to do but start; which she was about to do when her father hit upon an idea which filled him with delight, because it so deftly covered all the difficulties of the situation.

"I've got it, my love, so that you won't be robbed of your holiday, and at the same time we'll be pretty and satisfactorily fixed for a good time here. You send Belle Thompson here—perfectly beautiful creature, Tracy, perfectly beautiful; I want you to see that girl; why, you'll just go mad; yes, you send her right along, Gwendolen, and tell her—why, she's gone." He turned—she was already passing out at the gate.

"Well," said Sellers, blithely, to Tracy, "I shall miss her—parents always miss the children as soon as they're out of sight, it's only natural—but you'll be all right, because Miss Belle will supply the youthful element for you; and we old people will do our best, too."

Dinner was kept waiting for awhile for Miss Thompson, but as Gwendolen had not delivered the invitation to her the waiting did no good, and the household presently went to the meal without her. Poor old Sellers tried everything his hospitable soul could devise to make the occasion an enjoyable one for the guest, and the guest tried his honest best to be cheery and chatty and happy for the old gentleman's sake; in fact, all hands worked hard in the interest of a mutual good time; but the thing was a failure from the start. Tracy's heart was lead in his bosom; there seemed to be only one prominent feature in the landscape, and that was a vacant chair.

"SHE STOPPED AND LISTENED."

Meanwhile, they were having a similarly dismal time at the Thompson house—in fact, a twin experience. Gwendolen was ashamed of herself for allowing her disappointment to so depress her spirits. She explained that she was not feeling very well, and everybody could see that this was true. The moment the dinner was over the girl excused herself, and she hurried home, feeling unspeakably grateful to get away from that house.

Will he be gone? The thought arose in her brain, but took effect in her heels. She slipped into the house, threw off her things, and made straight for the dining-room. She stopped and listened. Her father's voice—with no life in it; presently her mother's—no life in that; a considerable vacancy, then a sterile remark from Washington Hawkins. Another silence; then, not Tracy's, but her father's voice again.

"He's gone," she said to herself despairingly, and listlessly opened the door.

"Why, my child," cried the mother, "how white you are. Are you—has anything——"

"White?" exclaimed Sellers. "It's gone like a flash; 'twasn't serious. Sit down, dear, sit down—goodness knows you're

welcome. Did you have a good time? Why didn't Miss Belle come? Mr. Tracy is not feeling well, and she'd have made him forget it."

She was content now; and out from her happy eyes there went a light that told a secret to another pair of eyes there, and got a secret in return. In just that infinitely small fraction of a second those two great confessions were made, received, and perfectly understood. All anxiety, apprehension, uncertainty, vanished out of these young people's hearts, and left them filled with a great peace.

Sellers had had the most confident faith that with the new reinforcement victory would be at this last moment snatched from the jaws of defeat, but it was an error. The talk was as stubbornly disjointed as ever. He was proud of Gwendolen, and liked to show her off, and here had been a great opportunity, and what had she made of it? He felt a good deal put out. It vexed him to think that this Englishman, with the travelling Briton's everlasting disposition to generalize whole mountain ranges from single sample grains of sand, would jump to the conclusion that American girls were as dumb as himself—generalizing the whole tribe from this single sample, and she at her poorest.

He went off to do some work which he said was pressing. The idolaters were the width of the room apart. The distance got shortened a little, now. Very soon the mother withdrew. The distance narrowed again.

The "Senator" still lingered. He was sorry for the young people; it had been a dull evening for them. In the goodness of his heart he tried to make it pleasant for them now; tried to remove the ill impression necessarily left by the general defeat; tried to be chatty, even tried to be gay. But the responses were sickly, there was no starting any enthusiasm; he would give it up and quit—it was a day specially picked out and consecrated to failures.

But when Gwendolen rose up promptly and smiled a glad smile, and said, with thankfulness and blessing, "*Must* you go?" it seemed cruel to desert, and he sat down again.

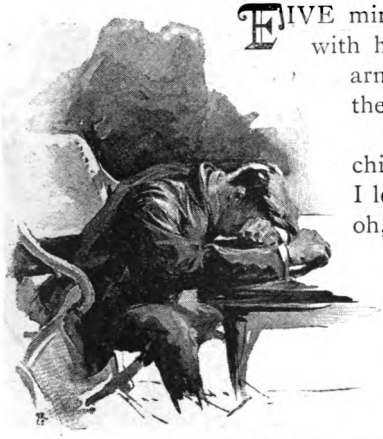
He was about to begin a remark when—when he didn't. He didn't know how he knew his concluding to stay longer had been a mistake, he merely knew it: and knew it for dead certain, too. And so he bade good-night, and went mooning out. As the door closed behind him those two were standing side by side, and the instant it closed they flung their arms about each other's necks, and there, heart to heart, and lip to lip——

THEY FLUNG THEIR ARMS ABOUT EACH OTHER'S NECKS."

"Oh, my God, she's kissing it!"

Nobody heard this remark, because Hawkins, who bred it, only thought it. He had turned, the moment he had closed the door, and pushed it open a little, intending to re-enter and ask what ill-advised thing he had done or said, and apologize for it. But he didn't re-enter; he staggered off stunned, terrified, distressed.

CHAPTER XX.



"SITTING WITH HIS HEAD BOWED DOWN."

FIVE minutes later he was sitting in his room, with his head bowed within the circle of his arms. Now and then a sob broke upon the stillness. Presently he said—

"I knew her when she was a little child, and used to climb about my knees; I love her as I love my own, and now—oh, poor thing, poor thing, I cannot bear it—she's gone and lost her heart to this mangy materializee! Why *didn't* we see that that might happen? But how could we? Nobody could; nobody could ever have dreamed of such a thing. You couldn't expect a person would fall in love with a wax-work. And this one doesn't even amount to that."

He went on grieving to himself, and now and then giving voice to his lamentations.

"It's done, oh, it's done, and there's no help for it; no undoing the miserable business. If I had the nerve, I would kill it. But that wouldn't do any good. *She* loves it; she thinks it's genuine and authentic. If she lost it she would grieve for it just as she would for a real person. And who's to break it to the family? Not I—I'll die first. Sellers is the best human being I ever knew, and I wouldn't any more think of—oh, dear, why it'll break his heart when he finds it out. And Polly's, too. *This* comes of meddling with such infernal matters."

Sally Sellers immediately and vividly realized that she was becoming a new being; a being of a far higher and worthier sort than she had been such a little while before; an earnest being in place of a dreamer; a finished temple, with the altar-fires lit and

the voice of worship ascending, where before had been but an architect's confusion of arid working plans, unintelligible to the passing eye and prophesying nothing.

"Lady" Gwendolen! The pleasantness of that sound was all gone; it was an offence to her ear now. She said—

"There—that sham belongs to the past; I will not be called by it any more."

"I may call you simply Gwendolen? You will allow me to drop the formalities straightway, and name you by your dear first name without additions?"

She was dethroning the pink, and replacing it with a rosebud.

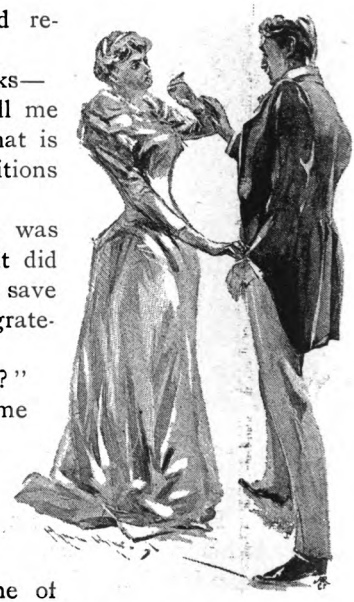
"There—that is better. I hate pinks—some pinks. Indeed, yes, you are to call me by my first name without additions—that is—well, I don't mean without additions *entirely*, but——"

There was a pause; his intellect was struggling to comprehend; presently it did manage to catch the idea in time to save embarrassment all around, and he said gratefully—

"*Dear* Gwendolen! I may say that?"

"Yes, part of it. But—don't kiss me when I am talking, it makes me forget what I was going to say. You can call me by part of that form, but not the last part. Gwendolen is not my name."

"Not your name?" This in a tone of wonder and surprise.



"'ANSWER ME TRULY.'"

The girl's soul was suddenly invaded by a creepy apprehension, a quite definite sense of suspicion and alarm. She put his arms away from her, looked him searchingly in the eye, and said—

"Answer me truly, on your honor. You are not seeking to marry me on account of my *rank?*"

There was something so finely grotesque about the question and its parent suspicion that he stopped to wonder and admire, and thus was he saved from laughing. Then, without wasting precious time, he set about the task of convincing her that he had been lured by herself alone, that he loved her with all his heart,

and could not love her more if she were a duchess, or less if she were without home, name or family. When he had finished there was gladness in her heart, though outwardly she was calm, even judicially austere. She prepared a surprise for him, now, calculated to put a heavy strain upon those disinterested protestations of his:

"Howard Tracy, I am no more an earl's child than you are!"

To her joy—and secret surprise, also—it never phased him. He was ready, this time, and saw his chance. He cried out with enthusiasm—

"It is only you, sweetheart, I never gave one envying glance towards your father's earldom. That is utterly true, dear Gwendolen."

"There—you mustn't call me that. I hate that false name. My name is Sally Sellers. From this time I banish visions, and will no more of them. I am going to be myself, clean of sham and folly and fraud, and worthy of you. There is no grain of social inequality between us; I, like you, am poor; I, like you, am without position or distinction; you are a struggling artist, I am that, too, in my humbler way. Our bread is honest bread, we work for our living. Hand in hand we will walk hence to the grave, helping each other in all ways, living for each other, being and remaining one in heart and purpose, one in hope and aspiration."

Tracy tried to break it, but she stopped him and kept the floor herself.

"My father honestly thinks he is an earl. Well, I leave him his dream. It was the dream of his ancestors before him. It has made fools of the house of Sellers for generations, and it made something of a fool of me. I am done with it now, and for good. Forty-eight hours ago I was privately proud of being the daughter of a pinchbeck earl, but to-day—oh, how grateful I am for your love, which has healed my sick brain and restored my sanity!"

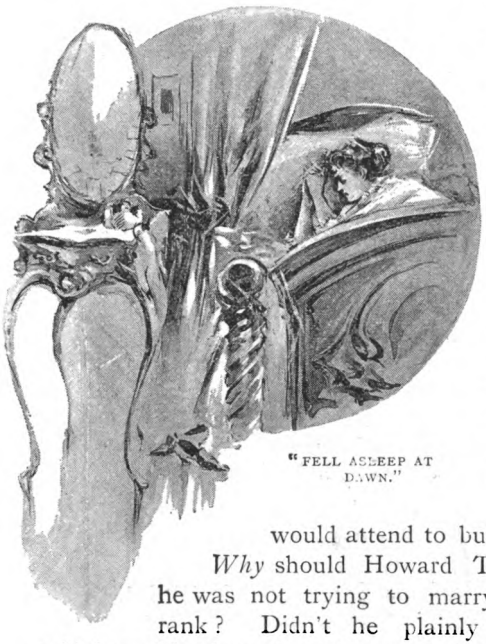
"I suppose you disapprove wholly of aristocracies and nobilities, now that you have renounced your title and your father's earldom?"

"Real ones? Oh, dear no—but I've thrown aside our sham one for good."

This answer fell just at the right time and just in the right place to save the poor unstable young man from changing his political complexion once more. He had been on the point of tottering again, but this prop shored him up, and kept him from floundering back into democracy. He went home glad that he had asked the fortunate question. The girl would accept a little thing like a genuine earldom; she was merely prejudiced against

the Brummagem article. Yes, he could have his girl and have his earldom, too. That question was a fortunate stroke.

Sally went to bed happy, too; and remained happy for nearly two hours; but at last, just as she was sinking into a contented and luxurious unconsciousness, the shady devil who lives and lurks inside of human beings, and is always waiting for a chance to do the proprietor a damage, whispered, "That question had a harmless look, but what was *back* of it, what was the secret motive of it?"



"FELL ASLEEP AT DAWN."

The shady devil had knifed her, and could retire now; the wound would attend to business for him.

Why should Howard Tracy ask that question, if he was not trying to marry her for the sake of her rank? Didn't he plainly look gratified when she said her objections to aristocracy had their limitations? Ah, he is after that earldom, that gilded sham—it isn't poor me he wants.

So she argued, in anguish and tears. Then she argued the opposite theory, but made a weak, poor business of it, and lost the case. She kept the arguing up, one side and then the other, the rest of the night, and at last fell asleep at dawn.

(To be continued.)

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

G R SIMS

"Zeph"—Yrus.

The Rev. Dr. Parker's opinion on smoking.

I hate smoking. From end to end it is a nuisance. It ends in cancer, apoplexy, bad temper, bankruptcy, and almost in hydrophobia. It is an invention of the devil. It is the pastime of perdition. No dog smokes. No bird pines for tobacco. No horse is a member of a pipe club. No intelligent person ever puts a cigar in his mouth. The whole idea and practice of smoking must be condemned as atheistical, agnostical, and infinitely detestable. Smoking has been abandoned by all reputable persons, and left to ministers, editors, poets, and other intellectual confectioners.

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G. R. Sims thinks all men should smoke.

Well, I think every man ought to smoke, because when he does not he is a source of great anxiety to his male friends—at least, all my acquaintances who don't smoke are to me when I am in their company. I never can believe that they are enjoying themselves. An old schoolfellow of mine, who is now a Liberal M.P., has recognised my feelings in the matter so far as to puff away at a chocolate cigar with an imitation red glow at the end of it when he sits down in my study to have a chat over old times. Another friend of mine, an artist (fancy an artist who doesn't smoke—why it's like a fish that doesn't swim), however, obstinately refuses even to pretend to smoke, and only fumes when I press him to

suck the end of his umbrella, or to do something that looks like enjoying himself. *In vino veritas* is an excellent proverb, but a great deal of *veritas* comes out in tobacco, especially if the *demi-tasse* is with it.

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Even on a balcony.

Associating as I do, and as I am sure thousands of my fellow Idlers do, smoking with the art of living one's life comfortably, my heart naturally sinks down into my boots when I find myself the inmate of an hotel or apartments where "gentlemen are requested not to smoke." The proprietor might, so far as I am concerned, stick up a notice that "gentlemen are requested not to make themselves comfortable." As I write a ghastly memory flashes across my brain of a boarding-house at Tunbridge Wells, where, being ill and unable to go out, I had to do my smoking under the most trying circumstances on account of the regulations of the establishment. I passed my days on a particularly insecure balcony, where I had to remain glued to one spot, as if I attempted to move I found myself intruding upon somebody else's window and family privacy; and at night I had to lean out of my bed-room window, much to the annoyance of a big dog whose kennel was immediately underneath, and who made the night hideous until I put out my pipe and put in my head. Whenever I go to a boarding-house or an hotel, and I am told that I may only smoke in the smoking-room, I beat an immediate retreat. We all know that smoking-room.

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He tells of his first pipe.

I began to smoke when I was twelve, that is, to smoke a pipe. Long before that I had tried a fearful thing called in those days a cigarette. It was a wedge of tobacco in a piece of brown paper gummed on to a piece of thick cane almost long enough for a walking-stick. My first pipe was a most elegant arrangement. The stem was a cricket bat, and the bowl was a cricket ball cut in half. I bought the tobacco for it at a small grocer's shop in the Broadway, Ealing, and then I and another boy went out and sat in the meadows by the Brent to smoke it between us. After a short engagement, we threw the pipe into the river and assisted each other back to school by easy stages. Ah me! I have had some glorious pipes since then, but they, too, are gone. There are no pipes like the old pipes. I can't get a pipe now that really works its way into my heart. They cost a lot of money, and have

patent screws and elaborate cases, but they never form part of your life as the dear old pipes used to do. If I break a pipe now, I don't shed tears over it and bury it in the back garden with a piece of stick to mark its resting place. But I did that sort of thing in the days when pipes *were* pipes. I remember a clay that I had coloured beautifully. I used to wipe it all over with a silk handkerchief and a kid glove every time I smoked it. One day, strolling along the road with it in my mouth, a man in a hurry knocked against me. My dear little clay fell, and was shivered into a thousand pieces. I sat down and wept by its warm remains like a child. I can't get clay pipes like that one now, and if I get one within measurable distance of it I can't colour it, and if I do colour it it doesn't seem quite to satisfy an aching void as it did once.

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Also of his cigar-holders.

In my German student days the meerschaum "spitze," or cigar-holder, was a great feature of existence. Many of us lived for our cigar-holders alone, and we brought the method of colouring them to a fine art. I have some of the cigar-holders I coloured with three-farthing German cigars still. They are locked away in a case, and whenever I look at them I grow sentimental. I can't colour a cigar-holder now. I don't even like to smoke one in the streets. The only well-known man I know who sticks to his cigar-holder out of doors is Sir John Astley. Some day I intend to smoke a clay pipe again, and smoke it out of doors. Now that a nobleman has protested against evening dress in the stalls, and a member of Parliament has taken his seat in a tweed travelling cap, it is quite possible that a respectable journalist may again be able to walk down Fleet Street with a coloured clay in his mouth without being suspected of unseemly swagger.

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Burgin smokes "with deefficulty."

I don't smoke much myself because I'm naturally lazy, and smoking makes me worse. In my salad days, too, a man once discouraged me with a green cigar. He said it wouldn't hurt a baby; but I evidently wasn't a baby, for it hurt me very much. Another man told me that he never meant to marry because no clergyman would allow him to smoke during the ceremony. In this instance, however, tobacco was of distinct service to the human race. A third man insisted on smoking in bed, but his wife very

properly went to America and got a divorce. Yet another always quoted his own verses on smoking until I sickened of tobacco, and travelled in order to escape his unelided anapæsts. In the East it was customary to smoke at dawn, when

"The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds"

challenged you to begin. If you once began, you couldn't leave off. Every Turk who met you promptly produced a cigarette ere your own was finished. You *had* to smoke at ceremonial visits, between the courses at meals, from daylight till dusk; and with a sublime disregard for more civilised productions, strangers in the streets stopped to light their cigarettes at yours. They seemed to find it handier than carrying matches. In Constantinople, a street beggar would silently step up to a pasha, light his cigarette at that of the great man's, and gravely pass on. And yet we say the Turks are a thriftless race.

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He tries a water pipe.

Over in Stamboul by the Bridge of the Golden Horn, everywhere you shall find the *hamal* (porter) sitting on a stool and smoking the hubble-bubble of contemplation. Draw up another stool beside him, note his abstracted gaze, and call an attendant from the coffee-house as you rest beneath the trellised vine-branches. The fez-bedecked follower of the Prophet brings what looks like a large decanter of water, and places it at your side. To this he affixes a long, flexible, sinuous tube. Tobacco is put on the seeming decanter, and a lump of live charcoal tops the tobacco. You place the amber mouthpiece between your lips, draw a long breath, and sit with all the mute incommunicableness of fishes. As you smoke, a dreamy calmness steals over you. The stately outlines of St. Sophia disappear. With hands on knees, head drooping forward, you inhale the water-chastened smoke. Discordant cries of *kebabjees*, distant howlings of street dogs, petitions of the beggars on the Bridge grow fainter. Your nerveless hands drop from your knees. The amber mouthpiece falls from your lips with a jerk, and—the pipe is finished! For an hour you have lapped oblivion.

"And if your fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave."

Then you drowsily shake yourself and remember where you are. As the *cafedjee* brings you a tiny cup of thick, sweet coffee, this quaint Eastern world, with its gliding ghosts of women, bearded mollahs, and bedizened hanoums, slowly comes back to you through the thickening mist of the night. You have enjoyed the pleasure

of opium-smoking without any of its ill-effects all for the sum of one piastre, the English equivalent of which is about twopence farthing.

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A lady defends lady smokers.

It is a matter of prejudice. In England we label our smoking carriages. Abroad they ticket the compartments reserved for those unfortunate people who don't like tobacco, "*Non-fumeurs*," "*Nichtraucher*," or some other barbaric term. Then English women, if they smoke at all, must enjoy a quiet cigarette very much *sous la rose*, or else start an asthmatic attack, which only smoking can cure, while their foreign sisters need not resort to these subterfuges, but may frankly avow a liking for the weed. A Spanish girl does not require to hide her cigarette from the eyes of her watchful duenna; an Austrian countess of the old *régime*, seated in her salon, mingles her cigar ashes and her fancy work; and at informal receptions in Italy cigarettes are handed round with coffee to both male and female guests. Ah! what opportunities for flirtation we lose in this country! There is no end to the pretty speeches which can be made, and to the confidences which may be interchanged, between whiffs of tobacco. I once heard of a language of smoking quite as useful if less poetic than the language of flowers. The average British mind does not, however, take kindly to the idea that smoking need not be confined to men. A young English friend of ours came to stay with us abroad. We introduced him to a charming German girl, with whom he talked and smoked in the beech woods the whole of one Sunday morning. He enjoyed himself greatly, but when he came down from the forest and met the respectable English colony filing out of church, doubts began to assail him. "If I were to tell my people at home," he remarked, "that I have been smoking with a young lady all through church time, they would say, 'My dear Charlie, what odd sort of people you have been meeting.'"

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Phillpotts remembers his early smoking days.

I have smoked everything, from chocolate cigarettes to cigars which cost (somebody else) half-a-crown each, from a yard of clay to the Missouri meerschaum or American corn-cob; but no tobacco experiment remains fresher in my mind than the very earliest which ever I made. When ten years of age, my attention was first seriously called to the subject of smoking by the head-master of a scholastic establishment I patronised. He made an

official statement one morning to the effect that a fragment of tobacco had been detected in a dormitory. He accused no individual, but wished it to be clearly understood, as a matter likely to interest us, that anybody found smoking anything whatsoever at any time would be instantly expelled. Then, of course, a few of us took the thing up seriously. We had never been told not to smoke before, or we should have looked into the matter sooner. A deliberate challenge of this kind can hardly be ignored by a boy who respects himself. That same evening, during "prep.," I formed a Secret Tobacco Society. It embraced myself and two chums—all tried men. Smith was rather faint-hearted, but naturally unprincipled and averse to discipline; Jones, on the contrary, had an over-bold spirit, and an almost heroic disregard for rules and regulations; whilst I myself was just one of those ordinary bad boys that every big school is full of. We drew out the laws of the Society, took the biggest oath we knew of secrecy, and, next morning, were collectively caned for showing even less familiarity than usual with our Greek Testament. This indignity merely stung us into action. We drew lots, and the task devolving upon me, I proceeded out of bounds at the earliest opportunity and called at a tobacconist's. "I'll trouble you," I said, "for three small wooden pipes, a box of fusees, and an ounce packet of tobacco." He desired to know the kind I preferred, and I answered cautiously, "Well, something fairly good, but not very strong—mild, in fact." Doubtless with an eye to future custom, he provided a sample of tobacco which was perhaps the mildest ever manufactured. I returned to the fold with my purchases, and the next day, being Saturday, Smith told our form master that we rather wanted to spend a half-holiday in the country and study botany. That master happened to be an Oxford Double First who understood most things in heaven and earth, excepting boys. A bad boy always beat him. Now there was nothing afoot just then which could possibly be luring such youths as Smith, Jones and myself into the lap of Nature. The nesting season had long passed by; there were neither local race meetings nor shooting-galleries nor circuses in the neighbourhood. But our Double First never thought out points of this kind. He just beamed upon us and believed Smith's transparent touch about botany, and told us to get him a specimen of something or other, and hoped, as a favour to him, we would all come home to tea. Then the Secret Tobacco Society started with a quiet determination to incur expulsion or perish in the attempt.

Three bad boys and a pipe.

We marched along, like model boys, until we came to a place where trespassers were prosecuted according to law. Then we got over the hedge into it, proceeded quietly through a game preserve, and finally found a pleasant spot where the bracken reached above our heads as we sat on the ground, where came no sound save the cooing of wood-doves in the pine trees above us. There we formed a circle, loaded our pipes, and plunged into the wild excitements of a first flirtation with the weed. We puffed clouds of smoke, and coughed and sneezed and choked at times, and simply revelled in humble worship of Lady Nicotine. It seemed absurd that men who could smoke as we could should be at school, under the control of mere Double Firsts, instead of out in the world, making our mark on our generation. But then, of course, Nature must need assert herself, as she always does in these cases. Our pipes gradually lost their charm, our high conversation became less animated, and finally ceased. Smith succumbed first. He turned a Liberty Art Fabric colour, and said it was a close afternoon, and that he should stroll quietly back to school and see if he could find some specimens of the something for our kind master. Then I became physically reduced, and tried to pass it off lightly as a sunstroke, and agreed that I, too, would wander homewards. I said, "I shall go a different way to you, Smith, then we may have a better chance of finding that specimen." We prepared to depart, and watched Jones load his second pipe with feeble admiration. "Don't say you're going on?" I asked. "Oh, yes," he answered, "I shall smoke another pipe presently when you fellows have gone." But I don't think he did really. I only know we all met again about an hour later at the school gates; and it chanced that our Double First was the only person who happened to see us upon our arrival. "Good heavens! boys," he exclaimed; "what's the matter? You all look as though you'd seen a ghost." Here was Providence simply playing into our hands. "Yes, sir," said Jones, "I rather think we have, sir." "And we're awful sorry, but we didn't see a speck of that stuff you wanted, sir," I continued. "Though we spent the whole afternoon looking for it, sir," concluded Smith. Certainly I will say of Smith that he never lost an opportunity of telling a safe lie, whether it might be necessary or not. We talked the matter over in church on the following day, and decided to disband the Secret Tobacco Society.

Did you ever, except on the stage, hear of any man lighting his pipe before committing a murder, or engaging in a burglary with a cigarette between his lips? I dare say it has been done, but one never gets such a bit of realistic colour in any newspaper report as to how the criminal was arrested while lighting a cigar over the body, or, after the fatal affray with the police, how the burglar took from his cigar-case a fine Havana, and indulged in the restful delights of a quiet weed. Mr. Willard seems to have been the author of the criminal cigarette in the character of the Spider, and quite recently, on the American stage, I saw him in a certain play, called "John Needham's Double," struggling with a cigar in a compromising fashion that would have betrayed him to a less unsophisticated hotel porter than that of Mr. Caine. Mr. Willard had committed a murder, and he could not keep his cigar alight. He chewed the end of it, bit it, looked at it, let it out, lighted it afresh, and with such artistic *vraisemblance* that could not fail to excite the pity of the most ordinary smoker, not to mention a devotee. As a rule, I should say the smoker is a good fellow. If John Needham had not done that murder he would have been able to enjoy his cigar. I recently saw an election row in a public-house. It was a tribute to the pacific influence of tobacco that both men, when they started up to fight, threw down their pipes. They knew by instinct that, if they kept their pipes alight, there would be no fighting; and that was the Indian method. The red men smoked in council; they smoked in peace; but in war the gentle influence was laid aside. What I mean to say is, that no true smoker can be a villain. When he becomes a villain he ceases to enjoy a pipe, and a cigar is positive torture to him. I knew John Needham intimately. He was an utter failure as a smoker after he had killed Joseph Norbury.

Hatton finds smoking incompatible with villainy.

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Salvation Yeo and his friend Charles Kingsley had an intimate acquaintance with tobacco, the lone man's companion, the bachelor's friend, the hungry man's food, the sad man's cordial. It is so difficult to be personal in these very anonymous days, otherwise one might mention great contemporary names among those of ardent smokers. There are Idlers I know who at the bare mention of witnesses can call up in their memories how John Bright chatted to them over his pipe; how Lord Tennyson laid aside his chibouk

And sees visions.

while he read to them with special emphasis some favourite composition; how they smoked with Carlyle, and had enjoyed the honour of a weed from H.R.H.'s own enamelled case; how they smoked, and said nothing for hours, with General Grant, and listened to words of wisdom from Spurgeon when most of his orthodox severity had evaporated in the smoke of one of his choicest cigars. I often wonder if Sir Walter Raleigh really met Shakespeare at the Mermaid. There is no reason why the poets should not have met at the Mermaid, Spenser included, and in that case we know that Shakespeare was a smoker. Depend upon it, Raleigh inducted Spenser into the mysteries of the pipe when they compared poetic notes at Kilcolman. The Queen, it must not be forgotten, "inclined her *eare*" to the pipe in question. There are those who profess to find evidence, in Sir Walter's pleasant relationship with the Queen, of Her Majesty's own inclinations in the direction of the smoky delights that Raleigh introduced at Court. Queen Elizabeth, *à la* Carlyle, with a pipe, would not make a characteristic picture, but Raleigh had a way of twisting a leaf in such seductive form that, lighted with a perfumed taper, it might have become even the lips of Elizabeth; for since those days matchless beauties and models of innocence and virtue have been known to enjoy the delights of that very weed "which on the Moslem's ottoman divides his hours, and rivals opium and his brides."

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Alden prefers bad cigars.

I constantly hear men say that they cannot afford to smoke good cigars, and that they are therefore compelled to confine themselves to pipes. Now there is no reason in the world why one should smoke good cigars in preference to bad ones. A liking for cigars is not natural, but acquired, and in the case of most men is acquired with difficulty and in the very teeth of their stomachs. It is just as easy to acquire a taste for very bad and very cheap cigars as to acquire a taste for very good and dear cigars. The man who takes the former course can smoke at a nominal expense, while to smoke good cigars is an expensive occupation. This grand economic idea flashed upon me some years ago, at a time when I imagined that I could smoke nothing but the best of Havanas. Straightway I began to cultivate a taste for bad cigars. It was rather trying at first, but in a very short time I found that a bad cigar was just as satisfactory as a good one. Pursuing my investigations in this department of science, I tried the Italian

cigars at three-halfpence each. I don't mean the "Virginias"—those long, thin cigars, with a straw running through the middle of each, for they are made of fairly good tobacco—but the black and gnarled "Cavours," which are without doubt the worst cigars the world has ever seen. I now greatly prefer a "Cavour" to the best "Villar y Villar" ever made. Of course my friends don't agree with me, but after all my "Cavours" do them no harm. On the contrary, a single "Cavour" will disinfect the entire house in which it is smoked. There is not a microbe known to science that will not curl up and die gladly when the smoke of a "Cavour" reaches him.

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He wants women to smoke.

What is the use of sending missionaries to the Zenanas of India when our own women are so deplorably in need of help and instruction! Statistics show that only one-and-a-half per cent. of English women smoke, and I know the statistics are right, for I made them myself. It is the only way to make sure that your statistics will be satisfactory, and it is followed by every professional reformer worthy of the name. With systematic and determined effort our women could be weaned from this terrible habit of not smoking. We should begin by instructing all little girls in the art of rolling and smoking cigarettes, and we should encourage women to sign the pledge of total abstinence from not smoking in every form. If women smoked, they would spend hours in quiet meditation, instead of spending them in costly shopping or devastating conversation. The cigarette would wean them from the excessive tea in which they now indulge, and their nerves would be greatly benefited thereby. Then, too, women would grow tolerant under the soothing influence of tobacco, and the day sighed for by Mr. Grant Allen, when the British matron will no longer sit on the head of British literature, and so thwart all its efforts to rise, will be close at hand. I do not speak of the immense improvement in our climate which would follow the adoption of the habit of smoking by English women, but the most prejudiced person can hardly deny that in Spain, Italy, Greece, and Turkey, countries where the woman who does not smoke is the exception, the climate is infinitely milder and better than it is in the British islands. The sun only shines on those lands where women smoke. Of course, you may say that this is a mere coincidence, but you can say the same of any two facts in science which stand in the apparent relation of cause and effect.

And quoteth statistics.

"Sir!" said Dr. Johnson, "Tell me what a nation smokes, and I will tell you what futurity has in store for that nation." This saying, which Boswell has unaccountably omitted to record, contains a great deal of truth. England and Germany are pipe-smoking nations, and as a consequence they are the two most powerful nations on the face of the globe. Spain and Portugal smoke cigarettes, and we all know what their position is in the scale of nations. At one time Italy smoked cigarettes also, and Metternich was entirely right in saying that she was only a geographical expression, but now-a-days Italy smokes the longest, and blackest, and strongest of cigars, and she is the sixth great power of Europe. There was a time when France dominated Europe. It was when Napoleon's grenadiers smoked pipes. To-day all France smokes cigarettes, and in spite of the terrible lesson concerning the inevitable results of cigarette smoking which the Germans gave them a quarter of a century ago, the French still have the impertinence to fancy that they are now a match for their pipe-smoking neighbours across the Rhine. Whether it is pipe-smoking that makes a nation great, or whether it is only a great and noble people that will prefer the pipe to the cigarette, I do not know. I simply point out the fact that national greatness and pipe-smoking go together, and leave it to more profound students to discover in what relation the two facts stand to one another. Now that the United States is about to celebrate at Chicago the four-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of tobacco by Columbus—the same man who you may possibly recollect incidentally discovered America—it is time that scientific men seriously studied the connection between tobacco and the greatness and freedom of nations.

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James I. throweth cold water on the glowing bowl.

I hold it aye to be a Kings part to purge the Body-Politicke of all euils & exceſſes, & would fain demonſtrate afreſh to my dear Countrey-men how abhorrent to Heauen is this ſtinking incenſe that aſcendeth day & night; but amid the heat & burden of the day I cannot find an hour to examine into this matter *de nouo*, & must needs be content with commending to the Readers of *The Idler* my booklet, *A Counterblaſte to Tobacco*, imprinted *Anno* 1604, wherein they will find the abuſes of this foreign cuſtome duly ſet forth at length. But, on ſecond thoughts, perchance theſe Idlers read nothing but what is under their noſes, ſo I will

ſhortly recapitulate my main poſitions, merely adding that my objections to ſmoak are to-day euen ſtronger than when I wrote. (1) It is a fallacie of the vulgar that *because* the braines of men are colde & wet, therefore *Tobacco* Smoak, being hote and dry, is good for them; a concluſion which no more followeth on the Premiſs than the Ratiocination of one who ſhould apply a cake of cold lead to his ſtomacke, becauſe the Liuer, being the fountaine of blood, is always hote. Moreouer, the Smoak hath also a venomous qualitee. (2) It is a vulgar fallacie that the affection of mankind for the Practiſe is a proof that it is good for them; inaſmuch as men are ledd aſtray by a mode, & furthermore, the affectation & conceit of the patient perſuadeth him he is benefited; yet how shall one drug cure of all diseases men of all complexions? (3) Men are by this cuſtom diſabled in their goods, ſpending many pounds a year upon this precious ſtinke, and are no better than drunkards. (4) It is a great iniquitee & against all humanity that the huſband ſhall not bee aſhamed to reduce thereby his delicate, wholeſome and cleane complexioned wife to that extremitee that either ſhee must alſo corrupt her ſweete breath therewith, or elſe reſolve to live in a perpetuall ſtinking torment. In ſhort, tis a cuſtome lothſome to the eye, hateful to the Noſe, harmefull to the braine, dangerous to the Lungs, & in the blacke ſtinking fume thereof neereſt reſembling the horrible Stigian ſmoke of the pit that is bottomeleſs.

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Zangwill reaſoneth with ye monarch.

So pleaſe your Majeſtie, I would beg leaue in all loyaltie & ſeruice to cry you mercy on behalf of the foreign weed, *Tobacco*, which ſtands for all time condemned by the potent *Counterblaſte* of a monarch, the maruelle of *Chriſtendom*, whoſe brow hath borne at once the bays of Apollo, the laurels of Mars, & the crownes of Scotia & Anglia. And *imprimis* I would venture humbly to obſerue that your Majeſties arguments are to the laſt Degree aſinine. Euen the title—which, as is cuſtomarie with great perſonages, is the beſt part of your Majeſties book—is marred by an unſeemlie conceſſion to the new humour. That your Majeſties manifold abuſes of the Logicks may be better eſpied, I will take them *seriatim*. (1) The ground founded upon the Theoricke of a deceiuable apparence of Reaſon, your Majeſtie is miſtaken in thinking that I hold it a ſure aphoriſme in the Phyſickes. For the braines are neuer colde & wet saue when there is water on them; & thoſe who do not ſmoak haue no braines for *Tobacco* to benefit. (2) Your Majeſties argumentation proueth how zealouſly

your Majeſtie ſtriueth to liue up to the nickname of the *British Solomon*. And, of a veritie, I could not myſelf run atilt more cunningly at this popular fallacie; though I might back up your Majeſtie with a moſt tranſparent illuſtration—to wit, that the affection of Mankind for monarchs is no proof that they are good for them. (3) I denie that *Tobacco* waſtes ones ſubſtance, & I would refer your Majeſtie to a back number of *The Idler* wherein I demonſtrate the Extrauagance of not ſmoaking. (4) And is it not an aduantage that it reſembleth to the Stigian ſmoke of the pit? The more we accuſtom ourſelves thereto, the leſs we ſhall ſuffer when we join your Majestie. Will your Majeſtie kindlie recommend a Brande? Nor can I conclude without a word as to the ill-taſte of that ſupplement to your Majesties booklet—a tax of Six Shillings & Eighte-Pence uppon euery Pounde-Waighte of *Tobacco*, ouer & aboue the Cuſtome of Two Pence uppon the Pounde-Waighte uſuallye paide heretofore. Did your Majeſtie hope to effect ſo little by Reaſon that your Majeſtie muſt needs fall back on Reuenue? Hauing challenged this habit by the Kings pen, how unmannerly to reſort to the coaſtguards cutlaſs & fight the cuſtome at the Cuſtome Houſe. Was it, perhaps, that your Majeſtie was wiſhful to promote Engliſh Agriculture or was getting up a cornere in Cabbaiges? Howſoever, Smoak hath suruiued the *Stuarts*. May I offer your Majeſtie a Cigarre?

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Angelina's opinion of the weed.

I found some rubbish about tobacco which Edwin had written, and took the liberty of substituting my *own* views on that subject; putting Edwin's, very properly, in the fire. When Eve ate that unlucky apple, fruitful source of all our woe, the Prince of Darkness carried away two of its seeds in his pocket, and planted them on earth to snare *men*. They grew into the vine and the tobacco plant, and became, respectively, the curse and the bane of poor women ever after! When the young male child first feels within him the workings of the spirit of evil, he buys a penny cigar, and borrows from the Demon a spark of brimstone to light it. . . . When he has recovered from the effects, he buys another. Tobacco is his first love, and the only one he is ever faithful to! Taboo her in polite society—forbid her entrance to elegant assemblies—shut your drawing-room doors upon her—man only flies with indecent haste to meet her on the sly at clubs and music-halls. Well may we women loathe tobacco, for she is our most insidious and dangerous rival; she goes with our husbands every-

where—even to Paris. You may take everything a man possesses away, as long as you leave him his pipe. Oh! I *know* if one would only read "between the lines," in the Book of Job *itself*, one would find that the man of Uz had a meerschaum quietly tucked away in his pocket all the time; the Devil knew better than to deprive him of *that!* He had his friends to see him, too, and the ash-heap was a smoke-room which told no tales. Poor, patient, *Mrs.* Job!

* * * *

Also of husbands.

All husbands want a smoke-room, and their arguments in its favour are so plausible! They affect a tender regard for your sitting-room furniture of which you did not suppose them capable; linked with a personal disinterestedness which is truly astonishing. *Any* corner will do for them, they tell you humbly and pathetically, until, in an evil moment, you consent, and grant that little back room upstairs. Now an Englishwoman's house is her castle, and as long as her husband smokes in the family sitting-rooms, she has him at least in check. He remembers that he is on his wife's territory, and he cannot give full vent to his consuming passion for the noxious weed in her presence: if he does she has but to cough, and the veriest brute will instantly "draw it mild." But once be weak enough to yield to the artfully-worded pleas for a "den," and farewell to domestic harmony! That room becomes the shrine of your rival, where she is solemnly enthroned; the unhallowed fire ever burning, and clouds of incense arising in her worship. In vain you suggest the greenhouse—once so dear—and tell him that the plants want fumigating, and you don't mind sitting there to watch him do it. He will recommend the gardener for that, and sneak upstairs again. He gradually collects all his peculiar properties in that room: photos you don't know, and books you never knew he possessed—books yellow with condensed iniquity! He develops a sudden passion for "business letters," which he writes up there—especially on Sundays; and you can no longer drop behind him to read the addresses over his shoulder. He entertains his friends there, of course, and they remain until the small hours, when Edwin comes down to let Jones out, smiling, as he has not smiled since the days of your courtship—until he sees *you*, and wants to know what you sat up for! Then, worst of all, you can never *talk* to your husband if he has a smoke-room. I am a very even-tempered woman myself, and I abhor scolding or nagging in any form, but even the best of men need a little occasional talking to—I don't mean lecturing,

but *talking;* all *women* understand the difference. Well, the first intimation you give of a desire to *talk* to your husband, he flies—like the criminal he is—to his sanctuary. You follow him with quiet firmness, and he meets you at the door with the usual shuffling excuse—important letters—and begs you to wait until he is disengaged (which means never). If you still persist, he subsides into his armchair, and begins to smoke with an ardour which is sickening. Well do you understand the cowardly *ruse;* in a few minutes' time you are choking with tobacco fumes, and further speech is hopeless. However much that man may have required a little talking to, all ends, like his own good resolutions—in smoke; and our earnest efforts for his moral and spiritual welfare are foiled by Tobacco. Faugh!

* * * *

Barr speaks of stopping smoking.

What I like about the habit of smoking is the ease with which it may be abandoned. Many vices, such as opium eating, whiskey drinking, lying, or reading newspapers, once acquired, obtain a certain hold on a man that is difficult to shake off. Not so smoking. The most inveterate smoker can quit it without the slightest trouble, and does—often. I have been in the habit of ceasing to smoke about once every three months, and I always swear off on New Year's Day. I think the smoker who does not occasionally resolve never again to touch tobacco, lacks some of those noble qualities which have made our nation so bright and good, and causes us to be the envy of foreigners. This commendable resolution should be made frequently, and, with constant practice, the abjuring of tobacco becomes an easy and pleasant exercise of the will. Neither is the resumption of smoking attended by any serious difficulty. I have often quit smoking for ever in the forenoon and began it again in the afternoon without experiencing the slightest inconvenience. Once I deserted tobacco for one whole heroic week. I wish I could record for the satisfaction of those who purpose a like desertion the effect the absence of the narcotic produced upon me; but the fact is I did not feel well that week, and so neglected to notice whether I suffered from the abstinence or not. My impression is that I did not, but then I was hardly myself that week, and it was scarcely a fair test. I wandered aimlessly about like a lost spirit. I constantly felt my pockets in an absent-minded way, and lit matches merely to blow them out again. These unexplainable symptoms disappeared when I "took on" tobacco again, and so I am forced to the conclusion that smoking is good for the health.

He counsels moderation.

To enjoy tobacco thoroughly, you must be moderate in its use. Put a limit on yourself, and see that you don't exceed that limit. This exercises the will, and makes a resolute man of you. I never allow myself to exceed the limit, no matter how strongly tempted I may be. If I find myself yearning to smoke more than my allowance, I merely "raise the limit," which phrase is, I am told, also used in the wicked but fascinating game of poker. This is a simple and easy thing to do. Say your limit is two ounces of tobacco a day, and you find by constant experiment that duty impels you to use two-and-a-half ounces, then raise the limit to three ounces, which leaves a margin for accidents. Every man, patriotic man, has his responsibilities to his country, and if everybody suddenly stopped smoking and drinking, what would become of the revenue? Looking at the matter, then, from the lofty standpoint of love of country, every man should fix his limit as high as his conscience will let him. I place my limit at one hundred and thirty-five cigarettes a day, and never exceed it. I have, however, been gradually compelled to raise the limit from the simple box of ten, at which I began, to the number just mentioned, as I acquired greater and greater facility in the use of the cigarette. This shows what may be done by constant practice and assiduous attention to the task undertaken. I set down these simple facts with no desire to boast. It is not genius on my part at all, but simply dogged perseverance. Any able-bodied man may accomplish the same degree of moderate perfection merely by putting his mind to it.

* * * *

Dr. Benjamin Ward Richardson sums up.

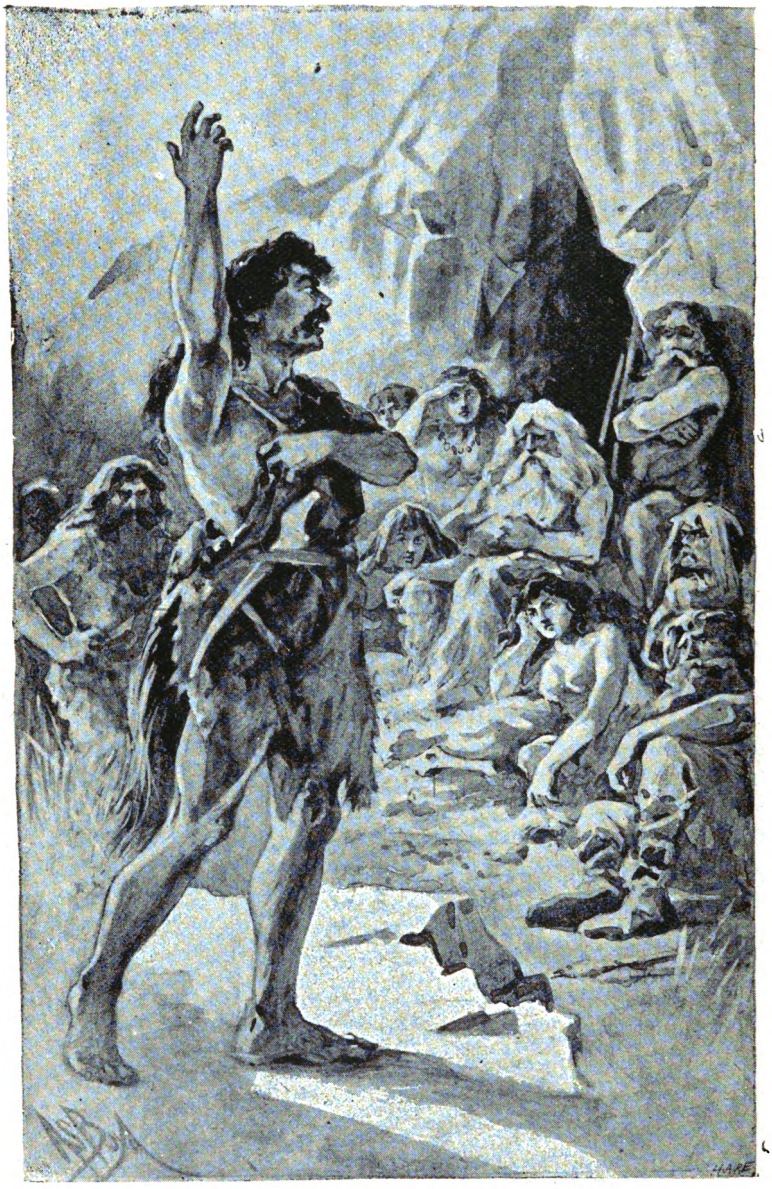
I have no prejudices as to the practice of smoking tobacco, for I have had experience for and against it. In my student life, and for some years of my early life as a practitioner of medicine, I did not smoke. Then friend Adolph, a student of natural science like myself, who would visit me in the evening, when I had for the time thrown physic to the dogs, induced me, in his German fashion, to mix the fumes of tobacco with the fumes of the midnight oil. I generally do whatever I do out and out, and for, what shall I say, twenty years at least, I did smoking. I liked the pipe because it was social, and if I were not so often tripped up by that slippery rascal Time, in striving to complete before I go hence certain researches, which I, wisely or foolishly, think important, I should be one of the most social fellows going. But I never was able to allay the solemn conviction, however much I liked tobacco,

that tobacco disliked me, or that it tantalised me, for I was not quite well so long as I was habituated to it. It was to me forbidden fruit; it took my reason prisoner, and I knew the fact as I laughed at it—unreasoning knowledge of which there is so much in this world!

* * * *

And tells of tobacco palsy.

One day I was summoned, professionally, by a medical brother, to visit a Spanish gentleman who was literally smoking himself to death, and I saw, for the first time, a direct death from tobacco palsy. "Think of this when you smoke tobacco," I said to myself, and in time I began to enquire into the action of tobacco smoke on the animal body, in a methodical way. It was a profitable study, and, coupled with the conviction that I suffered from smoking, it led me, on returning from a vacation in the Isle of Wight twenty years ago, to give up the habit abruptly and absolutely. It was a painful sacrifice. When I sat down to write I would, automatically, feel out for pipe and pouch, and when I was with friends who smoked—well, I had better say no more than that the self-denial was, unmistakably, a good denial, however severe; for smoking, physiologically speaking, is a bad habit at the best. It is not so bad as drinking—if drinking deserves the gallows, smoking deserves penal servitude for life—but it is radically bad. It disturbs the circulation; it often impedes digestion; it interferes with the fine adjustments of the senses, and sometimes impairs the lenses of vision altogether; it generates a craving for itself in the nervous organism, always an evil sign, and indirectly it calls up, not infrequently, hereditary devils, like cancer, which would lie latent if left alone. "Think of this when you smoke tobacco!" and say is the habit not one more honoured in the breach than the observance? Without either malice or uncharitableness, my vote is emphatically *aye* on that question.



IN THE NEOLITHIC AGE.

THE IDLER.

Primum Tempus.

By Rudyard Kipling.

IN the Neolithic Age savage warfare did I wage
For Fame and food and two-toed horse's pelt;
I was poet to my clan in that dim red Dawn of Man,
And I sang of all we fought, and feared, and felt.

Yea, I sang, as now I sing, when the Prehistoric Spring
Made the piled Biscayan ice-pack split and shove;
And the troll, and gnome, and dwerg, and the Gods of Cliff and Berg,
Were about me and beneath me and above.

Then a rival (of Solutré) told the tribe my style was *outré:*
'Neath a hammer, grooved, of dolomite, he fell;
And I left my views of Art, barbed and tanged, beneath the heart
Of a mammothistic poet at Grenelle.

So I stripped them scalp from scull, and my hunting-dogs fed full,
And their teeth I threaded neatly on a thong,
And I wiped my mouth and said: "It is well that they are dead,
For I know my work is right, and theirs was wrong!"

But my Totem saw the shame—from his ridge-pole shrine he came,
And he told me in a vision of the night:
"There are nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays,
And every single one of them is right."

* * * *

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Still they skirmish to and fro, men I warred with long ago,
When we headed off the aurochs turn for turn;
When the rich Allobrogenses never kept amanuenses,
And our only plots were piled in lakes at Berne.

Still, a cultured Christian age sees us scuffle, squeal, and rage,
Still we pinch and slap and jabber, scratch and dirk;
Still we let our business slide (as we dropped the half-dressed hide)
To show a fellow-savage how to work.

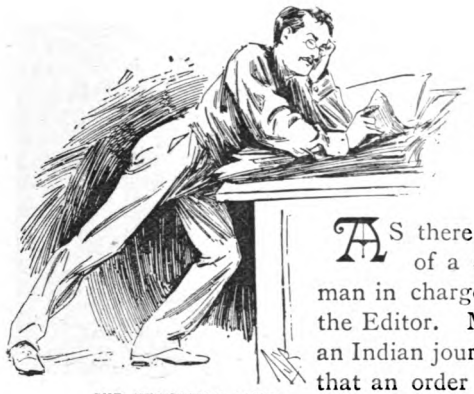
Still, the world is wondrous large—seven seas from marge to marge—
And it holds a vast of various kinds of man;
And the wildest dreams of Kew are the facts of Khatmandoo,
And the crimes of Clapham chaste in Martaban.

Here's my wisdom for your use, as I learned it when the moose
And the reindeer roared where Paris roars to-night:
There are nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays,
And—every—single—one—of—them—is—right!

My First Book.

By Rudyard Kipling.

Illustrations by A. S. Boyd and G. Hutchinson.



THE NEWSPAPER FILES.

As there is only one man in charge of a steamer, so there is but one man in charge of a newspaper, and he is the Editor. My chief taught me this on an Indian journal, and he further explained that an order was an order, to be obeyed at a run, not a walk, and that any notion or notions as to the fitness or unfitness of any particular kind of work for the young had better be held over till the last page was locked up to press. He was breaking me into harness, and I owe him a deep debt of gratitude, which I did not discharge at the time. The path of virtue was very steep, whereas the writing of verses allowed a certain play to the mind, and, unlike the filling in of reading matter, could be done as the spirit served. Now a sub-editor is not hired to write verses. He is paid to sub-edit. At the time, this discovery shocked me greatly; but, some years later, when I came to be an editor in charge, Providence dealt me for my subordinate one saturated with Elia. He wrote very pretty, Lamblike essays, but he wrote them when he should have been sub-editing. Then I saw a little what my chief must have suffered on my account. There is a moral here for the ambitious and aspiring who are oppressed by their superiors.

This is a digression, as all my verses were digressions from office work. They came without invitation, unmanneredly, in the

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nature of things; but they had to come, and the writing out of them kept me healthy and amused. To the best of my remembrance, no one then discovered their grievous cynicism, or their pessimistic tendency, and I was far too busy, and too happy, to take thought about these things.

So they arrived merrily, being born out of the life about me, and they were very bad indeed, and the joy of doing them was payment a thousand times their worth. Some, of course, came and ran away again, and the dear sorrow of going in search of these (out of office hours, and catching them) was almost better than writing them clear. Bad as they were, I burned twice as many as were published, and of the survivors at least two-thirds were cut down at the last moment. Nothing can be wholly beautiful that is not useful, and therefore my verses were made to ease off the perpetual strife between the manager extending his advertisements and my chief fighting for his reading-matter. They were born to be sacrificed. Rukn-Din, the foreman of our side, approved of them immensely, for he was a Muslim of culture. He would say: "Your potery very good, sir; just coming proper length to-day. You giving more soon? One-third column just proper. Always can take on third page."

"'YOUR POETRY VERY GOOD, SIR; JUST COMING PROPER LENGTH TO-DAY.'"

Mahmoud, who set them up, had an unpleasant way of referring to a new lyric as "*Ek aur chiz*"—one more thing—which I never liked. The job side, too, were unsympathetic, because I used to raid into their type for private proofs with old English and Gothic headlines. Even a Hindoo does not like to find the serifs of his f's cut away to make long s's.

And in this manner, week by week, my verses came to be printed in the paper. I was in very good company, for there is always an undercurrent of song, a little bitter for the most part, running through the Indian papers. The bulk of it is much better than mine, being more graceful, and is done by those less than Sir Alfred Lyall—to whom I would apologise for mentioning his name in this gallery—"Pekin," "Latakia," "Cigarette," "O.," "T.W.," "Foresight," and others, whose names come up with the stars out of the Indian Ocean going eastward.

Sometimes a man in Bangalore would be moved to song, and a man on the Bombay side would answer him, and a man in Bengal would echo back, till at last we would all be crowing together like cocks before daybreak, when it is too dark to see your fellow. And, occasionally, some unhappy Chaaszee, away in the China Ports, would lift up his voice among the tea-chests, and the queer-smelling yellow papers of the Far East brought us his sorrows. The newspaper files showed that, forty years ago, the men sang of just the same subjects as we did—of heat, loneliness, love, lack of promotion, poverty, sport, and war. Further back still, at the end of the Eighteenth Century, Hickey's *Bengal Gazette*, a very wicked little sheet in Calcutta, published the songs of the young factors, ensigns, and writers to the East India Company. They, too, wrote of the same things, but in those days men were strong enough to buy a bullock's heart for dinner, cook it with their own hands because they could not afford a servant, and make a rhymed jest of all the squalor and poverty. Lives were not worth two monsoons' purchase, and perhaps the knowledge of this a little coloured the rhymes when they sang:

> "In a very short time you're released from all cares—
> If the Padri's asleep, Mr. Oldham reads prayers!"

The note of physical discomfort that runs through so much Anglo-Indian poetry had been struck then. You will find it most fully suggested in "The Long, Long Indian Day," a comparatively modern affair; but there is a set of verses called "Scanty Ninety-five," dated about Warren Hastings' time, which gives a lively idea of what our seniors in the service had to put up with. One of the most interesting poems I ever found was written at Meerut, three or four days before the Mutiny broke out there. The author complained that he could not get his clothes washed nicely that week, and was very facetious over his worries.

My verses had the good fortune to last a little longer than some others, which were more true to facts and certainly better

RUDYARD_KIPLING'

workmanship. Men in the Army, and the Civil Service, and the Railway, wrote to me saying that the rhymes might be made into a book. Some of them had been sung to the banjoes round camp fires, and some had run as far downcoast as Rangoon and Moulmein, and up to Mandalay. A real book was out of the question, but I knew that Rukn-Din and the office plant were at my disposal at a price, if I did not use the office time. Also, I had handled in the previous year a couple of small books, of which I was part owner, and had lost nothing. So there was built a sort of a book, a lean oblong docket, wire-stitched, to imitate a D.O. Government envelope, printed on one side only, bound in brown paper, and secured with red tape. It was addressed to all heads of departments and all Government officials, and among a pile of papers would have deceived a clerk of twenty years' service. Of these "books" we made some hundreds, and as there was no necessity for advertising, my public being to my hand, I took reply-postcards, printed the news of the birth of the book on one side, the blank order-form on the other, and posted them up and down the Empire from Aden to Singapore, and from Quetta to Colombo. There was no trade discount, no reckoning twelves as thirteens, no commission, and no credit of any kind whatever. The money came back in poor but honest rupees, and was transferred from the publisher, the left-hand pocket, direct to the author, the right-hand pocket. Every copy sold in a few weeks, and the ratio of expenses to profits, as I remember it, has since prevented my injuring my health by sympathising with publishers who talk of their risks and advertisements. The down-country papers complained of the form of the thing. The wire binding cut the pages, and the red tape tore the covers. This was not intentional, but Heaven helps those who help themselves. Consequently, there arose a demand for a new edition, and this time I exchanged

"SUNG TO THE BANJOES ROUND CAMP FIRES."

the pleasure of taking in money over the counter for that of seeing a real publisher's imprint on the title-page. More verses were taken out and put in, and some of that edition travelled as far as Hong-Kong on the map, and each edition grew a little fatter, and, at last, the book came to London with a gilt top and a stiff back, and was advertised in the publishers' poetry department.

But I loved it best when it was a little brown baby with a pink string round its stomach; a child's child, ignorant that it was afflicted with all the most modern ailments; and before people had learned, beyond doubt, how its author lay awake of nights in India, plotting and scheming to write something that should "take" with the English public.

By Countess Marta Freddi.
Illustrations by J. Gülich.

THERE she was again!

He was quite sure he had seen her behind the flowers in the window; and she was evidently going out, because she had her hat and jacket on.

And then an older lady, the Frau Majorin herself, approached the other window of the sitting-room, and took the key-basket off the work-table—an unmistakable sign that the mother and daughter were going out together.

To twist a hat-brush round his hat in an artistic circle and to pull on his best gloves was the work of an instant to the watcher in the opposite house; and before the ladies had emerged from their front door he was standing lost in contemplation of a row of shining boots outside the window of the shoemaker's shop over which his rooms were situated.

"Now or never," he thought. It was Camilla's birthday. The eighteen little candles of her birthday-cake had shone so brilliantly that morning on the table in front of the dining-room sofa that their light could be seen right across the street, and Camilla herself had looked over so kindly at her opposite neighbour, as he stood, as usual, at his window, worshipping the walls she lived behind, that the young man's heart leaped within him. He felt

there was no longer any doubt about it; Camilla had remarked him—remarked him, moreover, with a certain amount of approval, and he had a presentiment of something exciting going to happen.

With his bodily eyes fixed on the shoemaker's window, and his heart's eyes looking out at the back of his head, he suddenly became aware that the door opposite opened, and the ladies stepped out into the street.

"THE LADIES STEPPED OUT INTO THE STREET."

How nice she looked! Not that he could have told why; he knew nothing whatever about ladies' clothes; on the paternal estate in East Prussia, where he had lived all his life till he came to town to study law, his mother was the only lady he ever saw. He was quite ignorant of the fact that Camilla's plain grey dress and smart little grey hat and veil were the best possible set-off to her brown eyes and curly brown hair; but he was prepared to swear that whatever she had on was the right thing to have on, and that her costume was simplicity and elegance personified.

And to think that to-day was her birthday, and he could not offer the most trifling token of his intense admiration! Bertrand Walther, who was usually well supplied with the sinews of war by his devoted mother, was at this moment what is vulgarly called cleaned out. It was the end of the month, and in the recesses of his waistcoat pocket nestled exactly twopence. That sum was the whole of his earthly wealth till the postman brought him his next month's allowance, which

was always sent in a registered letter, and consequently could only be delivered to Walther in person. Now, Frau Bertrand always sent this cheque a day in advance of its time, and the postman had actually brought it to the house; but, as ill-luck would have it, Walther was out when he called, and he had taken the letter away with him, promising to come again the next day.

"HAD TAKEN THE LETTER AWAY."

Walther, lost in reflections, partly of Camilla and partly of the postman, followed the two ladies at a discreet distance down the street, and saw them enter a confectioner's shop. He thought he could not do better than follow their example. With a business-like air, he opened the shop-door, and, walking in, he observed, without appearing to look, that the two ladies were already seated on a red-velvet sofa, behind a little marble-topped table, and giving their orders to the waiter.

"Ah, they're drinking birthday chocolate," said the young man to himself. And he felt that the sticky brown liquid would taste as the nectar of the gods if only he might sit down and drink it with Her. Then he thought it would be nice to drink the same drink, even at a different table. And then he thought of his twopence, and, with a bitter sigh, recognised the fact that chocolate cost threepence a cup; and in a voice charged with bitterness, said to the waiter, "Cup of coffee!"

The two ladies opposite seemed to enjoy their little meal immensely. Camilla's lovely brown eyes sparkled with good temper and merriment as she joked with her mother, and picked out all the nicest cakes for her. Now and then, her glance fell upon Walther without the slightest coquetry, but with such an expression of simple friendly interest that the young man's pulses throbbed with delight. It was the first time he had ever sat in the same room with this charming girl, and heard her speak. What a sympathetic voice she had! It had sometimes floated across to him when she was singing in the evening at home. And even

on the bitterest winter nights he always opened the window wide and sat close to it, so that he might not lose a single tone.

The chocolate and cakes came to an end. The ladies carefully flicked off the few crumbs that had fallen on to their dresses. Camilla handed her mother a trim little Russia leather hand-bag, and the Frau Majorin, with a certain dignified slowness, touched the spring and opened it.

"HE ALWAYS OPENED THE WINDOW WIDE."

An embarrassed questioning expression suddenly appeared in the face of the elder lady. Then she looked at Camilla, and said something. Both ladies put their hands in their pockets, and drew them out empty. A hurried undertone conversation took place between them.

Camilla appeared to be making a proposal to her mother, and—merciful heaven! they looked at him! At him, with his twopence in his pocket!

The Frau Majorin energetically shook her head.

At this moment, the waiter, a thin, red-headed person, with a disagreeable expression, took up his post near the ladies' table. Evidently, he awaited the settling of their little bill.

After glancing at the waiter, the Frau Majorin regained her usual dignified composure, at least outwardly. She took up a newspaper, leant back coolly on her sofa, and the attendant spirit vanished.

For one short minute, necessity and a natural reluctance to

ask for help from a stranger battled in the embarrassed lady's breast. Then a glance at Walther's good-hearted, honest, steady face decided her.

"How very awkward! I haven't got my purse with me!" she said, in a voice slightly raised, and trembling a little with nervousness.

BOWED PROFOUNDLY.'

That was a signal-shot! Come what might, he was determined to take advantage of his opportunity.

He rose, drew a card out of his pocket-book, advanced with a firm step to the ladies, bowed profoundly, and begged them to allow him, as a near neighbour, to have the honour, under the circumstances, of taking upon himself the settling of their little debt. Camilla's mother expressed her gratitude for his kind offer, and both ladies, conducted by Walther to the door, left the shop.

As he turned back to his table, the waiter approached him: "The ladies had one shilling and fourpence to pay."

"All right—I know, I'll pay it," and he sat down again. Outwardly, he was calm, but inwardly there raged in him a perfect storm of ecstasy, at the thought that he had spoken to them; that he was no longer a stranger.

Then suddenly he remembered his twopence, and the remembrance fell on him like a shower of cold water. He began to

realise his position. It was an exceedingly awkward one. How on earth was he to get out of it? Should he leave his watch as a pledge that he would return and pay? Yes, it seemed a feasible plan. But the next instant he rejected it. It occurred to him that the ladies might come again, and hear, by some means, of what he had done, and he blushed to the roots of his hair to think of their knowing of his impecunious condition.

It seemed to him that the horrible waiter was fixing on him a suspicious eye.

"A cup of chocolate," ordered Walther, without exactly knowing what he was saying. He detested sweet things, but the whirl of combined enchantment and embarrassment he was in made him reckless.

He moved to a seat close to the window. "Someone or other that I know is sure to pass, and I'll call them in," he thought.

* * * *

"NEVER TOOK HIS EYES OFF HIM."

The cup of chocolate and several little cakes and biscuits were swallowed, but not a soul that he knew passed the window! Every moment his situation became more painful. Numbers of customers came in and went out again. The waiter seemed to find a peculiar fascination in Walther's neighbourhood, and never took his eyes off him. Walther ordered writing materials, and, for the sake of appearing to do something, began a vague and confused letter to his mother, with one eye on the paper and the other fixed on the street. But no angel appeared; only the waiter, who began to clear away the chocolate with an unusual amount of noise and accentuation, and devoted an unnecessary amount of time to sweeping up the crumbs and polishing the table.

"Are you expecting someone to meet you here, sir?"

"A slice of apple tart," said Walther, severely.

He was temporarily, at least, relieved of the waiter's presence. But what, oh what should he do with the apple tart when he got it? Already the sweet, heavy smell of the confectionery seemed to be penetrating all his pores, enervating his nerves, and causing him to feel the most curious and uncomfortable sensations.

The apple tart came. It was still quite hot. So much the better; he must wait till it cooled. And for another quarter of an hour there he sat, with the penetrating perfume of the tart steaming up into his nostrils. And still no one came to release him from his bondage.

"SHAKING SCHMALERT BY BOTH HANDS."

At last, as he was sinking into the depths of despair, he suddenly became aware of two long, thin legs and a checked suit making their way along the pavement.

"Hah, Schmalert! Saved!" he gasped, and with one stride, not even waiting to reach his hat, he was on the doorstep, shaking Schmalert by both hands. Schmalert was slightly surprised by this enthusiastic reception, but evidently pleased, and willingly allowed himself to be drawn inside the shop.

"Oh yes, I'll come, of course; why not? Awfully comfortable in here, too—beastly cold outside—but I say, what is it? What's the matter with you? You seem excited."

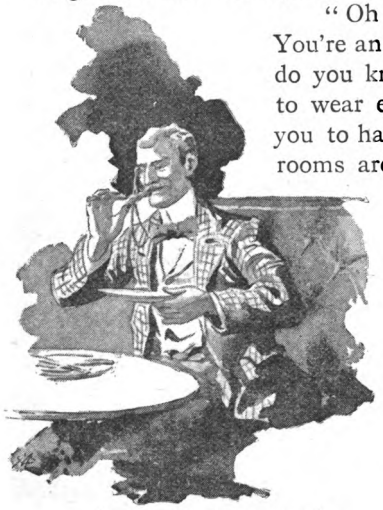
"Oh, it's all right. Here, just have a piece of tart. Here, waiter, a slice of apple tart for the gentleman."

"The apple tart's capital, Walther. I must confess your invitation's most opportune; thirty-first, you know, to-day; got exactly three-halfpence in my pocket! Can't understand why my money hasn't been sent. Waiter, another slice of tart. I know you'll excuse me, Walther."

Walther merely groaned inaudibly. Even the remarkable appetite displayed by the tall, blonde student, who was absolutely revelling in the pastrycook's productions, failed to rouse him from the blank despair into which he had fallen.

At last, after a long, silent pause of reflection, he said, "Look here, Schmalert. My shoes pinch me frightfully, in a place that I alone can feel, and which hurts me abominably. And I've got

lots of places to go to when I leave here; the first thing I ought to do is to go home to see the postman; he's been twice to the house with my money, and missed me both times. Will you do me the favour of going and catching him for me? Tell him I'll give him a good tip if he'll come here to me; he knows me quite well, and then, if you like, I can let you have anything you want to go on with. Will you?"



"SOME LOVELY JAM-PUFFS."

"Oh yes, I'll go, of course; why not? You're an awfully good fellow, Walther. But do you know, really, I'd advise you always to wear easy boots; it would be so easy for you to have them made for you, when your rooms are over a shoemaker's. Oh, I can see quite plainly those hurt you awfully; your face shows it, my dear boy. You seem to me to be one of those people who need easy circumstances and broad-toed boots, as my old father used to say. Well, good-bye, I'm off. The apple tart was capital. I'll soon be back with old moneybags," and Schmalert disappeared.

"Some lovely jam-puffs have just come upstairs," announced the pale waiter, "and as you seem, sir, to be so fond of cakes, I thought——"

"All right, bring some." Walther supposed he must go on eating as long as he stayed there, and he became callous now about what he ate.

In another half-hour, Schmalert came back in triumph, personally conducting the welcome postman.

"Easy circumstances and broad-toed boots," murmured Walther, as, with a sigh of relief, he quitted the atmosphere of cakes, and took in a long breath of the cold, fresh outdoor air.

When he got home, he found a surprise awaiting him. A note from the Frau Majorin lay on his table, containing the amount of her debt, and also a friendly invitation to spend the evening with them if he had nothing better to do.

The intelligent reader will probably divine that he accepted the invitation.

Camilla has long been Camilla Walther, and is the happiest

of wives. She has only one fault to find with her husband, and that is his rooted antipathy to confectioners' shops; and it seems to her that he ought to have nothing but pleasant recollections of them, considering that he made her acquaintance in one!

"HIS ROOTED ANTIPATHY TO CONFECTIONERS' SHOPS."

Novel Notes.

By Jerome K. Jerome. Illustrations by J. Gülich.

VIII.

ONE day we spoke of crime and criminals. We had discussed the possibility of a novel without a villain, but had decided that it would be uninteresting.

"It is a terribly sad reflection," remarked MacShaugnassy, musingly; "but what a desperately dull place this earth would be if it were not for our friends the bad people. Do you know," he continued, "when I hear of people going about the world trying to reform everybody and make them good, I get positively nervous. Once do away with sin, and literature will become a thing of the past. Without the criminal classes we authors would starve."

"SMUGGLER BILL."

"I shouldn't worry myself about it," replied Jephson, drily; "one half mankind has been 'reforming' the other half pretty steadily ever since the Creation, but there appears to be a fairly appreciable amount of human nature left in it, notwithstanding. Suppressing sin is much the same sort of task that suppressing a volcano would be—plugging one vent merely opens another. Evil will last our time."

"I cannot take your optimistic view of the case," answered MacShaugnassy. "It seems to me that crime—at all events, interesting crime—is being slowly driven out of our existence. Pirates and highwaymen have been practically abolished. Dear old 'Smuggler Bill' wears a frock coat and a top hat, and fights the exciseman with a pen instead of a cutlass. The pressgang that was always so ready to rescue our hero from his approaching marriage has been disbanded. There's not a 'lugger' fit for the purposes of abduction left upon the coast. Men settle their 'affairs of

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honour' in the law courts, and return home wounded only in the pocket. Assaults on unprotected females are confined to the slums, where heroes do not dwell, and are avenged by the nearest magistrate. Your modern burglar is generally an out-of-work plumber or a greengrocer. His 'swag' usually consists of an overcoat and a pair of boots, in attempting to make off with which he is captured by the servant-girl. Suicides and murders are getting scarcer every season. At the present rate of decrease, deaths by violence will be unheard of in another decade or so, and a murder story will be laughed at as too improbable to be interesting. A certain section of busybodies are even crying out for the enforcement of the seventh commandment. If they succeed authors will have to follow the advice generally given to them by the critics, and retire from business altogether. I tell you our means of livelihood are being filched from us one by one. Authors ought to form themselves into a society for the support and encouragement of crime."

MacShaugnassy's leading intention in making these remarks was to shock and grieve Brown, and in this well-meant object he succeeded. Brown is—or was, in those days—an earnest young man with an exalted —some were inclined to say exaggerated—view of the importance and dignity of the literary profession. Brown's notion of the scheme of Creation was that God made the universe so as to give the literary man something to write about. I used at one time to credit Brown with originality for this idea; but as I have grown older I have learned that the theory is a very common and popular one in artistic circles.

"BROWN EXPOSTULATED WITH MACSHAUGNASSY."

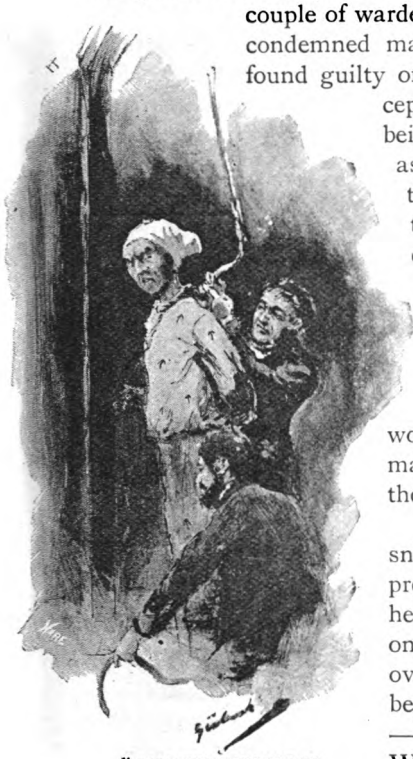
Brown expostulated with MacShaugnassy. "You speak," he said, "as though literature were the parasite of evil."

"And what else is she?" replied the MacShaugnassy, with enthusiasm. "What would become of literature without folly and sin, error and sorrow? What is the work of the literary man but raking a living for himself out of the dust-heap of human woe. Just imagine, if you can, a perfect world—a world where men and women never said foolish things and never did unwise ones; where small boys were never mischievous and children never made

awkward remarks; where dogs never fought and cats never screeched; where wives never henpecked their husbands and mothers-in-law never nagged; where men never went to bed in their boots and sea captains never swore; where plumbers understood their work and old maids never dressed as girls; where niggers never stole chickens and proud men were never seasick! where would be your humour and your wit? Imagine a world where lovers were never separated and loved ones never died; where good old men were never ruined and maidens never deceived; where tender hearts were never bruised; where strong men's lips were never pressed with pain; where eyes were never dim, and where feet were never weary! where would be your pathos? Imagine a world where husbands never loved more wives than one, and that the right one; where wives were never kissed but by their husbands; where men's hearts were never black and women's thoughts never impure; where there was no hating and no envying; no desiring; no despairing! where would be your scenes of passion, your interesting complications, your subtle psychological analyses? My dear Brown, we writers—novelists, dramatists, poets—we fatten on the misery of our fellow-creatures. God created man and woman, and the woman created the literary man when she put her teeth into the apple. We came into the world under the shadow of the serpent. We are special correspondents with the Devil's army. We report his victories in our three-volume novels, his occasional defeats in our five-act melodramas."

"WE FATTEN ON THE MISERY OF OUR FELLOW-CREATURES."

"All of which is very true," remarked Jephson; "but you must remember it is not only the literary man who traffics in misfortune. The doctor, the lawyer, the preacher, the newspaper proprietor, the weather prophet, will hardly, I should say, welcome the millennium. I shall never forget an anecdote my uncle used to relate, dealing with the period when he was chaplain of the Lincolnshire county jail. One morning there was to be a hanging; and the usual little crowd of witnesses, consisting of the sheriff, the governor of the jail, three or four reporters, a magistrate, and a couple of warders, was assembled in the prison. The condemned man, a brutal ruffian who had been found guilty of murdering a young girl under exceptionally revolting circumstances, was being pinioned by the hangman and his assistant; and my uncle was employing the last few moments at his disposal in trying to break down the sullen indifference the fellow had throughout manifested towards both his crime and his fate.



"TOLD THE HANGMAN TO 'HURRY UP.'"

"My uncle, failing to make any impression upon him, the governor ventured to add a few words of exhortation, upon which the man turned fiercely on the whole of them.

"'Go to hell,' he cried, 'with your snivelling jaw. Who are you all to preach at me? *You're* glad enough I'm here—all of you. Why I'm the only one of you as ain't going to make a bit over this job. Where would you all be, I should like to know, you canting ——, if it wasn't for me and my sort? Why it's the likes of me as *keeps* the likes of you,' with which he walked straight to the gallows and told the hangman to 'hurry up,' and not keep the gentlemen waiting."

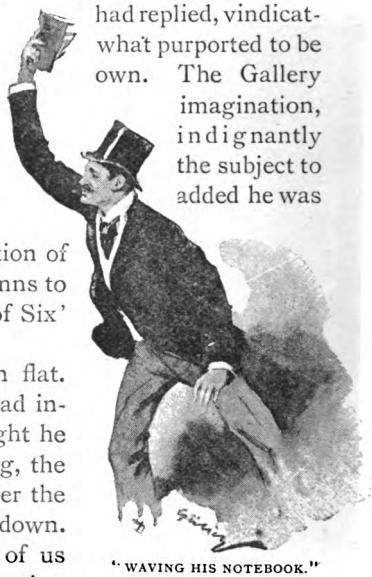
"There was some 'grit' in that man," said MacShaugnassy.

"Yes," added Jephson, "and wholesome wit, also."

MacShaugnassy puffed a mouthful of smoke over a spider which was just about to kill a fly. This caused the spider to

fall into the river, from where a supper-hunting swallow quickly rescued him.

"You remind me," he said, "of a scene I once witnessed in the office of *The Daily*—well, in the office of a certain daily newspaper. It was the dead season, and things were somewhat slow. An endeavour had been made to launch a discussion on the question 'Are Babies a Blessing.' The youngest reporter on the staff, writing over the simple but touching signature of 'Mother of Six,' had led off with a scathing, though somewhat irrelevant, attack upon husbands, as a class; the Sporting Editor, signing himself 'Working Man,' and garnishing his contribution with painfully elaborated orthographical lapses, arranged to give an air of verisimilitude to the correspondence, while, at the same time, not to offend the susceptibilities of the democracy (from whom the paper derived its chief support), had replied, vindicating the British father, and giving what purported to be stirring midnight experiences of his own. The Gallery Man, calling himself, with a burst of imagination, 'Gentleman and Christian,' wrote indignantly the subject to that he considered the agitation of added he was be both impious and indelicate, and surprised that a paper holding the exalted, and deservedly popular, position of *The* —— should have opened its columns to the brainless vapourings of 'Mother of Six' and 'Working Man.'



"WAVING HIS NOTEBOOK."

"The topic had, however, fallen flat. With the exception of one man who had invented a new feeding bottle, and thought he was going to advertise it for nothing, the outside public did not respond, and over the editorial department gloom had settled down.

"One evening, as two or three of us were mooning about the stairs, praying secretly for a war or a famine, Todhunter, the town reporter, rushed past us with a cheer, and burst into the Sub-editor's room. We followed. He was waving his notebook above his head, and clamouring, after the manner of people in French exercises, for pens, ink, and paper.

"'What's up?' cried the Sub-editor, catching his enthusiasm; 'influenza again?'

"'Better than that!' shouted Todhunter. 'Excursion steamer

run down, a hundred and twenty-five lives lost—four good columns of heartrending scenes.'

"'By Jove!' said the Sub, 'couldn't have happened at a better time either'—and then he sat down and dashed off a leaderette, in which he dwelt upon the pain and regret the paper felt at having to announce the disaster, and drew attention to the exceptionally harrowing account provided by the energy and talent of 'our special reporter.'"

"It is the law of nature," said Jephson: "we are not the first party of young philosophers who have been struck with the fact that one man's misfortune is another man's opportunity."

"Occasionally, another woman's," I observed.

I was thinking of an incident told me by a nurse. If a nurse in fair practice does not know more about human nature—does not see clearer into the souls of men and women than all the novelists in little Bookland put together—it must be because she is physically blind and deaf. All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players; so long as we are in good health, we play our parts out bravely to the end, acting them, on the whole, artistically and with strenuousness, even to the extent of sometimes fancying ourselves the people we are pretending to be. But with sickness comes forgetfulness of our part, and carelessness of the impression we are making upon the audience. We are too weak to put the paint and powder on our faces, the stage finery lies unheeded by our side. The heroic gestures, the virtuous sentiments, are a weariness to us. In the quiet, darkened room, where the footlights of the great stage no longer glare upon us, where our ears are no longer strained to catch the clapping or the hissing of the town, we are, for a brief space, ourselves.

This nurse was a quiet, demure little woman, with a pair of dreamy, soft grey eyes that had a curious power of absorbing everything that passed before them without seeming to look at anything. Gazing upon much life, laid bare, had given to them a slightly cynical expression, but there was a background of kindliness behind.

During the evenings of my convalescence she would talk to me of her nursing experiences. I have sometimes thought I would put down in writing the stories that she told me, but they would be sad reading. The majority of them, I fear, would show only the tangled, seamy side of human nature, and God knows there is little need for us to point that out to each other, though so many now-a-days seem to think it the only work worth doing. A few

of them were sweet, but I think they were the saddest; and over one or two a man might laugh, but it would not be a pleasant laugh.

"I never enter the door of a house to which I have been summoned," she said to me one evening, "without wondering, as I step over the threshold, what the story is going to be. I always feel inside a sick room as if I were behind the scenes of life. The people come and go about you, and you listen to them talking and laughing, and you look into your patient's eyes, and you just know that it's all a play."

"SHE WOULD TALK TO ME OF HER NURSING EXPERIENCES."

The incident that Jephson's remark had reminded me of, she told me one afternoon, as I sat propped up by the fire, trying to drink a glass of port wine, and feeling somewhat depressed at discovering I did not like it.

"One of my first cases," she said, "was a surgical operation. I was very young at the time, and I made rather an awkward mistake—not a professional mistake, I don't mean—but a mistake of another kind that I ought to have had more sense than to make.

"My patient was a good-looking, pleasant-spoken gentleman.

They were well-to-do people living in South Kensington. The wife was a pretty, dark little woman, but I never liked her from the first; she was one of those perfectly proper, frigid sort of women, who always give me the idea that they were born in a church, and have never got over the chill. However, she seemed very fond of him, and he of her; and they talked very prettily to each other—too prettily to be quite genuine, I should have said, if I'd known as much then as I do now, but it did me good to hear them at the time.

"The operation was a difficult and dangerous one. When he woke up he was, as the doctor had told me he would be, highly delirious. I kept him as quiet as I could, but towards evening, as the delirium only increased, I began to get anxious. I bent down close to him and listened to his ravings. Over and over again I heard the name 'Louise.' Why wouldn't 'Louise' come to him? It was so unkind of her—they had dug a great pit, and were pushing him down into it—oh! why didn't she come and save him? He should be saved if she would only come and take his hand.

"'I HEARD THE NAME 'LOUISE.'"

"His cries became so pitiful that I could bear them no longer. His wife had gone to attend a prayer meeting, but the church was only in the next street. I called in one of the maids to watch him for a minute, and, slipping on my bonnet, ran across. I told my errand to one of the vergers, and he took me to her. She was kneeling, but I could not wait. I pushed open the pew door, and, bending down, whispered to her, 'Please come over at once; your husband is more delirious than I quite care about, and you may be able to quiet him.'

"She whispered back, without raising her head, 'I'll be over in a little while. The meeting won't last much longer.'

"Her answer surprised and nettled me. 'You'll be acting more like a Christian woman by coming home with me,' I said

sharply, 'than by stopping here. He keeps calling for you, and I can't get him to sleep.'

"She raised her head from her hands: 'Calling for me?' she asked, with a slightly incredulous accent.

"'Yes,' I replied, 'it's a common enough thing with people in delirium, their mind runs on the particular person who is most in their thoughts. It has been the same ever since he woke: Where's Louise, why doesn't Louise come to him.

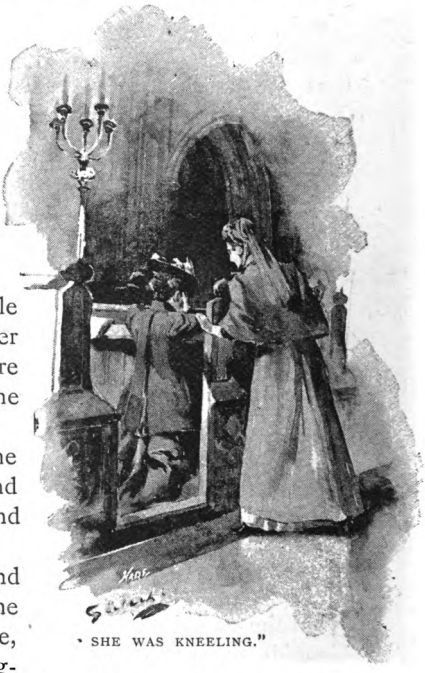
"Her face was in shadow, but as she turned it away, and the faint light from one of the turned-down gas jets fell across it, I fancied I saw a smile upon it, and I disliked her more than ever.

"'I'll come back with you,' she said, rising and putting her books away, and we left the church together.

"She asked me many questions on the way: Did patients, when they were delirious, know the people about them? Did they remember actual facts, or was their talk mere incoherent rambling? Could one guide their thoughts in any way?

"The moment we were inside the door, she flung off her bonnet and cloak, and came upstairs quickly and softly.

"She walked to the bedside, and stood looking down at him, but he was quite unconscious of her presence, and continued muttering. I suggested that she should speak to him, but she said she was sure it would be useless, and drawing a chair back into the shadow, sat down beside him.



"SHE WAS KNEELING."

"I could see that she was no good to him, and about twelve o'clock I tried to persuade her to go to bed, but she said she would rather stop there, and I, being little more than a girl then, and without much authority, let her. All night long he tossed and raved, the one name on his lips being ever Louise—Louise—Louise—and all night long that woman sat there in the shadow, never moving, never speaking, with a set smile on her lips that made me long to take her by the shoulders and shake her.

"At one time he imagined himself back in his courting days, and pleaded, 'Say you love me, Louise. I know you do. I can read it in your eyes. What's the use of our pretending. We *know* each other. Put your white arms about me. Let me feel your breath upon my lips. Ah! I knew it, my darling, my love, my love, my love!'

"The whole house was deadly still, and I could hear every word of his troubled mutterings. I almost felt as if I had no right to be there listening to them, but my duty held me. Later on, he fancied himself planning a holiday with her, so I concluded. 'I shall start on Monday evening,' he was saying, 'and you can join me in Dublin at Jackson's Hotel on the Wednesday, and we'll go straight on.'

"His voice grew a little faint, and his wife moved forward on her chair, and bent her head closer to listen.

"'No, no,' he continued, after a pause, as if in answer to some question, 'there's no danger whatever. It's a lonely little place, right in the heart of the Galway Mountains—O'Mullen's Halfway House they call it—five miles from Ballynahinch. We shan't meet a soul there. We'll have three weeks of heaven all to ourselves, my goddess, my Mrs. Maddox from Boston—don't forget the name.'

"He laughed in his delirium; and the woman, sitting by his side, laughed also; and then the truth flashed across me.

"I ran up to her and caught her by the arm. 'Your name's not Louise,' I said, looking straight at her. It was an impertinent interference, but I felt excited, and acted on impulse.

"I LISTENED TO HER FOOTSTEPS GOING DOWN THE STAIRS."

"'No,' she replied, very quietly; 'but it's the name of a very dear school friend of mine. I've got the clue to-night that I've been waiting two years to get. Good night, nurse, thanks for fetching me.'

"She rose and went out, and I listened to her footsteps going down the stairs, and then drew up the blind and let in the dawn.

"I've never told that incident to anyone until this evening," my nurse concluded, as she took the empty port wine glass I had been holding out of my hand, and stirred the fire. "A nurse wouldn't get many engagements if she had the reputation for making blunders of that sort."

"WE LEFT THE DOOR AJAR SO THAT THEY COULD CALL OUT TO ONE ANOTHER."

Another story that she told me showed married life more lovelit, but then, as she added, with that cynical twinkle that glinted so oddly from her gentle, demure eyes, this couple had only very recently been wed—had, in fact, only just returned from their honeymoon.

They had been travelling on the Continent, and there had both contracted typhoid fever, which showed itself immediately on their home-coming.

"I was called in to them on the very day of their arrival," she said; "the husband was the first to take to his bed, and the wife followed suit twelve hours afterwards. We placed them in adjoining rooms, and, as often as was possible, we left the door ajar so that they could call out to one another.

"Poor things! They were little more than boy and girl, and

they worried more about each other than they thought about themselves. The wife's only trouble was that she wouldn't be able to do anything for 'poor Jack.' 'Oh, nurse, you will be good to him, won't you?' she would cry, with her big childish eyes full of tears; and the moment I went in to him it would be: 'Oh, don't trouble about me, nurse, I'm all right. Just look after the wifie, will you?'

"I had a hard time between the two of them, for, with the help of her sister, I was nursing them both. It was an unprofessional thing to do, but I could see they were not well off, and I assured the doctor that I could manage. To me it was worth while going through the double work just to breathe the atmosphere of unselfishness that sweetened those two sick rooms. The average invalid is not the patient sufferer people imagine. It is a fretful, querulous, self-pitying little world that we live in as a rule, and that we grow hard in. It gave me a new heart, nursing these young people.

"The man pulled through, and began to slowly recover, but the wife was a wee slip of a girl, and her strength—what there was of it—ebbed day by day. As he got stronger he would call out more and more cheerfully to her through the open door, and ask her how she was getting on, and she would struggle to call back laughing answers. It had been a mistake to put them next to each other, and I blamed myself for having done so, but it was too late to change then. All we could do was to beg her not to exhaust herself, and to let us, when he called out, tell him she was asleep. But the thought of not answering him or calling to him made her so wretched that it seemed safer to let her have her way.

"Her one anxiety was that he should not know how weak she was. 'It will worry him so,' she would say; 'he is such an old fidget over me. And I *am* getting stronger, slowly; ain't I, nurse?'

"One morning he called out to her, as usual, asking her how she was, and she answered, though she had to wait for a few seconds to gather strength to do so. He seemed to detect the effort, for he called back anxiously, 'Are you *sure* you're all right, dear?'

"'Yes,' she replied, 'getting on famously. Why?'

"'I thought your voice sounded a little weak, dear,' he answered; 'don't call out if it tries you.'

"Then for the first time she began to worry about herself—not for her own sake, but because of him.

"'Do you think I *am* getting weaker, nurse?' she asked me, fixing her great eyes on me with a frightened look.

"'You're making yourself weak by calling out,' I answered, a little sharply. 'I shall have to keep that door shut.'

"'Oh, don't tell him'—that was all her thought—'don't let him know it. Tell him I'm strong, won't you, nurse? It will kill him if he thinks I'm not getting well.'

"'TELL HIM I'M STRONG, WON'T YOU NURSE?'"

"I was glad when her sister came up, and I could get out of the room, for you're not much good at nursing when you feel, as I felt then, as though you had swallowed a tablespoon and it was sticking in your throat.

"Later on, when I went in to him, he drew me to the bedside, and whispered me to tell him truly how she was. If you are telling a lie at all, you may just as well make it a good one, so I told him she was really wonderfully

"Poor lad! that lie did him more good than a week's doctoring and nursing; and next morning he called out more cheerily than ever to her, and offered to bet her a new bonnet against a new hat that he would race her and be up first.

"She laughed back quite merrily (I was in his room at the time). 'All right,' she said, 'you'll lose. I shall be well first, and I shall come and visit you.'

"Her laugh was so bright, and her voice sounded so much stronger, that I really began to think she had taken a turn for the better, so that when on going in to her I found her pillow wet with tears, I could not understand it.

"'Why, we were so cheerful just a minute ago,' I said; 'what's the matter?'

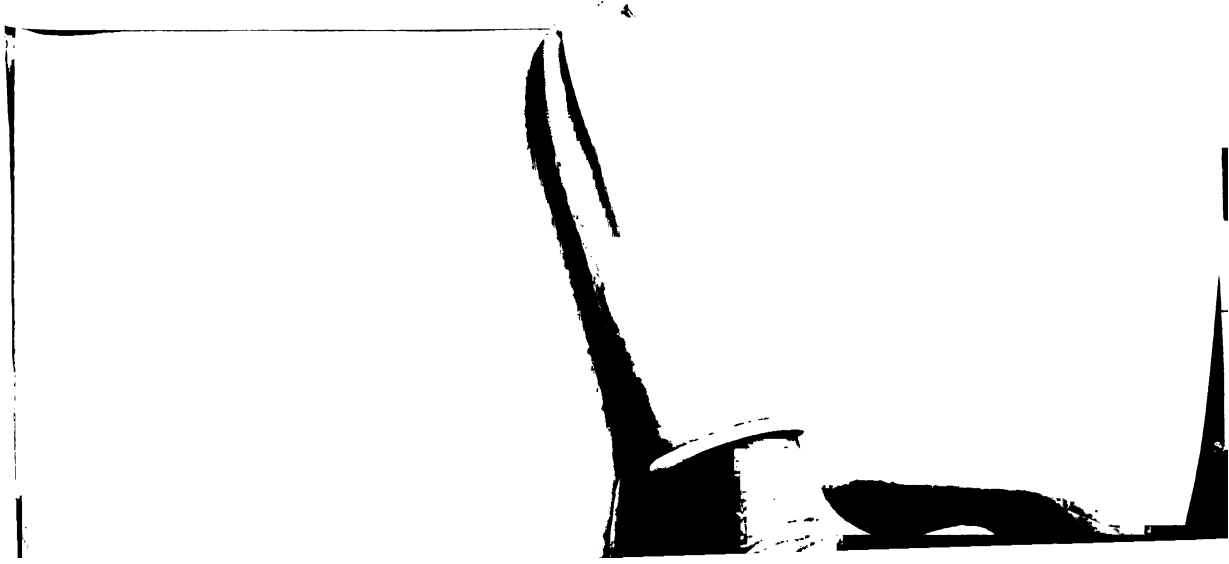
"'Oh, poor Jack!' she moaned, as her little, wasted fingers opened and closed upon the counterpane. 'Poor Jack, it will break his heart.'

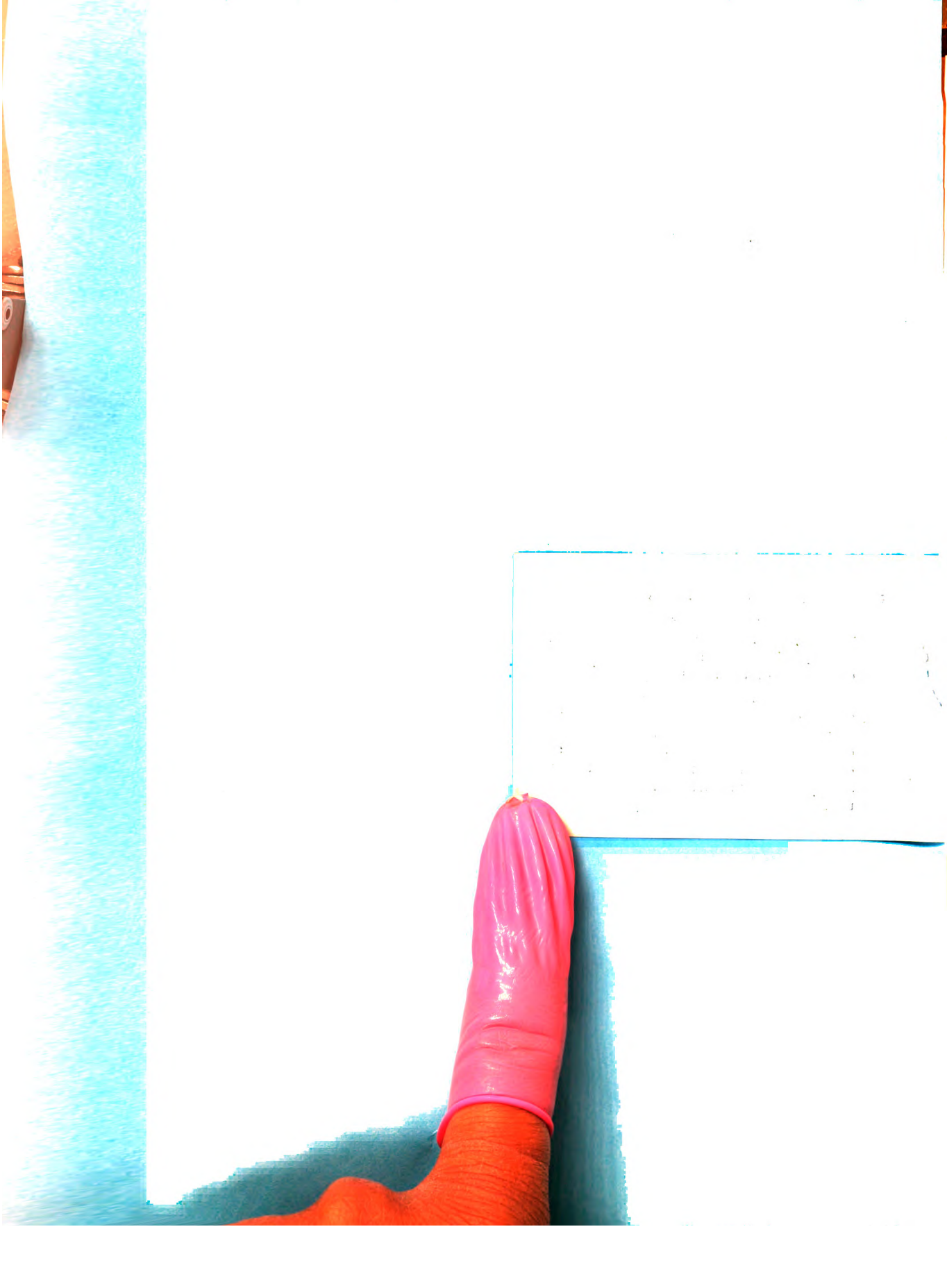
"It was no good my saying anything. There comes a moment when something tells your patient all that is to be known

ERRATUM.—After the word "wonderfully," on page 504, line 19, read:

well, only a little exhausted after the illness, as was natural, and that I expected to have her up before him.

"Poor lad! that lie did him more good than a week's doctoring and nursing; and next morning he called out more cheerily than ever to her, and offered to bet her a new bonnet against a new hat that he would race her and be up first.





about the case, and the doctor and the nurse can keep their hopeful assurances for where they will be of more use. The only thing that would have brought comfort to her then would have been to convince her that he would soon forget her and be happy without her. I thought it at the time, and I tried to say something of the kind to her, but I couldn't get it out, and she wouldn't have believed me if I had.

"So all I could do was to go back to the other room, and tell him that I wanted her to go to sleep, and that he must not call out to her until I told him.

"She lay very still all day. The doctor came at his usual hour and looked at her. He patted her hand, and just glanced at the untouched food beside her.

"'Yes,' he said, quietly. 'I shouldn't worry her, nurse; let her sleep.' And I understood.

"Towards evening she opened her eyes, and beckoned to her sister, who was standing by the bedside, to bend down.

"'Jeanie,' she whispered, 'do you think it wrong to deceive anyone when it's for their own good?'

"'I don't know,' said the girl, in a dry voice; 'I shouldn't think so. Why do you ask?'

"'Jeanie, your voice was always very much like mine—do you remember, they used to mistake us at home. Jeanie, call out for me—just till—till he's a bit better; promise me.'

"They had loved each other, those two, more than is common among sisters. Jeanie could not answer, but she pressed her sister closer in her arms, and the other was satisfied.

"'I SHOULDN'T WORRY HER, NURSE.'"

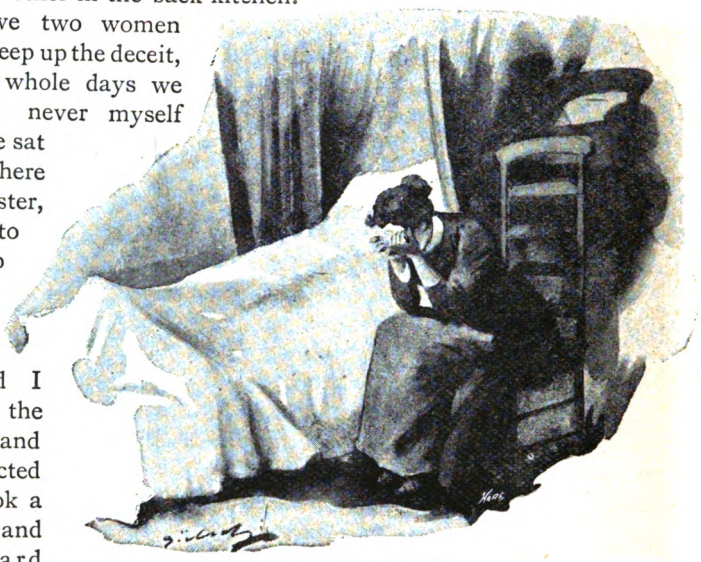
"Then, drawing all her little stock of life together for one final effort, the dying child raised herself in her sister's arms.

"'Good-night, Jack,' she called out, loud and clear enough to be heard through the closed door.

"'Good-night, little wife,' he cried back, cheerily; 'are you all right?'

"'Yes, dear. Good-night.'

"Her little, worn-out frame dropped back upon the bed, and the next thing I remember is snatching up a pillow, and holding it tight-pressed against Jeanie's face for fear the sound of her sobs should penetrate into the next room; and afterwards we both got out, somehow, by the other door, and rushed downstairs, and clung to each other in the back kitchen.



"JEANIE SAT IN THE ROOM."

"How we two women managed to keep up the deceit, as for three whole days we did, I shall never myself know. Jeanie sat in the room where her dead sister, from its head to its sticking-up feet, lay outlined under the white sheet; and I stayed beside the living man, and told lies and acted lies, till I took a joy in them, and had to guard against the danger of over-elaborating them.

"He wondered at what he thought my 'new merry mood,' and I told him it was because of my delight that his wife was out of danger; and then I went on for the pure devilment of the thing, and told him that a week ago, when we had let him think his wife was growing stronger, we had been deceiving him; that, as a matter of fact, she was at that time in great peril, and I had been in hourly alarm concerning her, but that now the strain was over, and she was safe; and I dropped down by the foot of the bed, and burst into a fit of laughter, and had to clutch hold of the bedstead to keep myself from rolling on the floor.

"He had started up in bed with a wild white face when Jeanie had first answered him from the other room, though the

sisters' voices had been so uncannily alike that I had never been able to distinguish one from the other at any time. I told him the slight change was the result of the fever, that his own voice also was changed a little, and that such was always the case with a person recovering from a long illness. To guide his thoughts away from the real clue, I told him Jeanie had broken down with the long work, and that, the need for her being past, I had packed her off into the country for a short rest. That afternoon, downstairs, we concocted a letter to him, and I kept Jeanie's eyes wiped while she wrote it, so that no tears should fall on it, and that night she travelled twenty miles down the Great Western line to post it, returning by the next up-train.

"No suspicion of the truth ever occurred to him, and the doctor helped us out with our deception; yet his pulse, which day by day had been getting stronger, now beat feebler every hour. In that part of the country where I was born and grew up, the folks say that wherever the dead lie, there round about them, whether the time be summer or winter, the air grows cold and colder, and that no fire, though you pile the logs half-way up the chimney, will ever make it warm. A few months' hospital training generally cures one of all fanciful notions about death, but this idea I have never myself been able to get rid of. My thermometer may show me sixty, and I may try to believe that the temperature *is* sixty, but if the dead are beside me I feel cold to the marrow of my bones. I could *see* the chill from the dead room crawling underneath the door, and creeping up about his bed, and reaching out its hand to touch his heart.

"Jeanie and I redoubled our efforts, for it seemed to us as if Death were waiting just outside in the passage, watching with his eye at the keyhole for either of us to make a blunder and let the truth slip out. I hardly ever left his side except now and again to go into that next room, and poke an imaginary fire, and say a few chaffing words to an imaginary living woman on the bed where the dead one lay; and Jeanie sat close to the corpse, and called out saucy messages to him, or reassuring answers to his anxious questions.

"At times, knowing that if we stopped another moment in these rooms we should scream, we would steal softly out and rush downstairs, and, shutting ourselves out of hearing in a cellar underneath the yard, laugh till we reeled against the dirty walls. I think we were both getting a little mad

"One day—it was the third of that nightmare life, so I learned

afterwards, though for all I could have told then it might have been the three hundredth, for Time seemed to have fled from that house as from a dream, so that all things were tangled—I made a slip that came near to ending the matter, then and there.

"I had gone in to that other room. Jeanie had left her post for a moment, and the place was empty.

"INTO THE STILLNESS THERE CAME A SOUND."

"I did not think what I was doing. I had not closed my eyes that I can remember since the wife had died, and my brain and my senses were losing their hold of one another. I went through my usual performance of talking loudly to the thing underneath the white sheet, and noisily patting the pillows and rattling the bottles on the table.

"On my return, he asked me how she was, and I answered, half in a dream, 'Oh, bonny, she's trying to read a little,' and he raised himself on his elbow and called out to her, and for answer there came back silence—not the silence that *is* silence, but the silence that is like a voice. I do not know if you understand what I mean by that. If you had lived among the dead as much as I have you would know.

"I darted to the door and pretended to look in. 'She's fallen asleep,' I whispered, closing it; and he said nothing, but his eyes looked queerly at me.

"That night, Jeanie and I stood in the hall talking. He had fallen to sleep early, and I had locked the door between the two rooms, and put the key in my pocket, and had stolen down to tell her what had happened, and to consult with her.

"'What can we do! God help us, what can we do!' was all that Jeanie could say. We had thought that in a day or two he would be stronger, and that the truth might be broken to him. But

instead of that he had grown so weak, that to excite his suspicions now by moving him or her would be to kill him.

"We stood looking blankly in each other's faces, wondering how the problem could be solved; and while we did so the problem solved itself.

"The one woman-servant had gone out, and the house was very silent—so silent that I could hear the ticking of Jeanie's watch inside her dress. Suddenly, into the stillness there came a sound. It was not a cry. It came from no human voice. I have heard the voice of human pain till I know its every note, and have grown careless to it; but I have prayed God on my knees that I may never hear that sound again, for it was the sob of a soul.

"HE HAD CREPT FROM HIS OWN ROOM."

"It wailed through the quiet house and passed away, and neither of us stirred.

"At length, with the return of the blood to our veins, we went upstairs together. He had crept from his own room along the passage into hers. He had not had strength enough to pull the sheet off, though it was evident he had tried. He lay across the bed with one hand clasping hers."

My nurse sat for a while without speaking, a somewhat unusual thing for her to do.

"You ought to write your experiences," I said.

"Ah!" she said, giving the fire a contemplative poke, "if you'd seen as much sorrow in the world as I have, you wouldn't want to write a sad book."

"I think," she added, after a long pause, with the poker still in her hand, "it can only be the people who have never *known* suffering who can care to read of it. If I could write a book, I should write a merry book—a book that would make people laugh."

"What an unliterary idea," I replied; "you evidently have not mixed much in cultured society, or you would know that such a book would be bad art."

"Perhaps," she answered, smiling, "but it might be good nature."

(To be continued.)

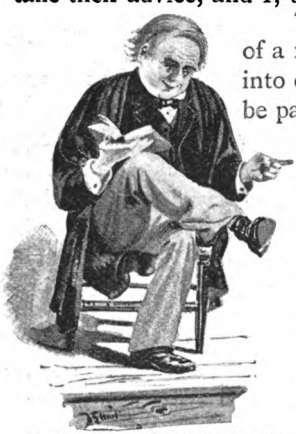
M M

Prove It!

By Bennett Coll.

Illustrated by A. Elliot.

BEFORE I write another line I desire to intimate, in the most emphatic manner, that I will not be responsible for any after effects which may follow the reading of this sketch. I would rather imitate the method of the sandwich-man, who bears upon his front the legend, "Don't look at my back," or that of the enterprising advertisers who score out their business circulars with two black crosses, and who add the words, "Don't read this." Such keen judges of human nature know how far the public will take their advice, and I, too, would be a benefactor to my kind.



"YOU HAVE BEEN WORKING TOO HARD."

The fact is, I am the proud possessor of a riddle which is guaranteed to send a man into delirium in one short hour if he will only be patient and steadily fix his mind upon it. It is expedient that the victim should, first of all, make his will and say good-bye to his relations. Thus bereft of all earthly cares, he will be able to go mad comfortably and to make no fuss about it.

The origin of the thing was this. When I was a boy at school (never mind how long ago), it was my turn, on a certain day, to "go on" in the translation of a Greek author. After I had floundered hopelessly amongst the tenses, moods, genders, and so forth, of that Greek writer's grammar—which I despised—my master kindly and generously interposed.

"Coll," he said—and the benevolence of his smile was as an angel's—"Coll, my dear fellow, you are getting mixed. You have been working too hard. Your brain is not equal to the continued strain. Let me bring your mind to a clearer view of things. Instead of puzzling over Thucydides try to guess this riddle. A

man, A, was showing his friend, B, over his picture gallery. Pausing before a portrait, A said to B—

'Sisters and brothers have I none;
That man's father is my father's son.

Of whom was the portrait a counterfeit presentment?"

I pause here to say that I have every wish to be perfectly fair in this matter. I am not one of those who ask a conundrum merely for the sake of retorting to an answer—"That's what the other donkey said." Not at all. In fact, I have no reason for concealing the answer, because the fun comes afterwards. Therefore I willingly make you a present of the solution. Here it is. The portrait was the portrait of himself; that is, of the speaker—A, I mean—the fellow who was showing things to the other fellow. See?

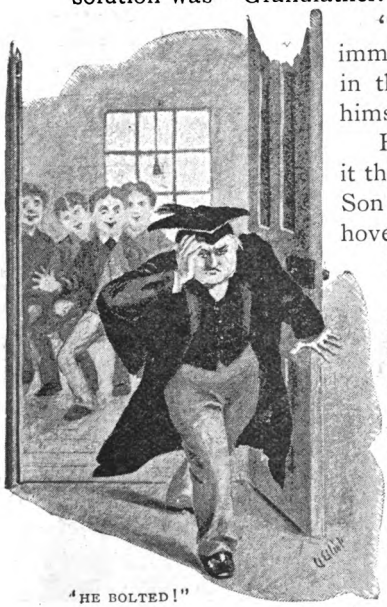
Eh? You have "heard it before"? No doubt. It is "a hardy chestnut"? Quite so. "Noah laughed at it"? Very probably. But *can you work it out?* That's the point. Try it. You know the answer; make it square with the conundrum. You "can easily do it"? All right. Satisfy yourself and you will satisfy me. Meantime, I bid you good-day; because we are not likely to meet again. Besides, I want to go on to my own experiences.

"I PLACED THAT GRINNING PHOTOGRAPH BEFORE ME."

I shall not detail the horrors of the day when I first became acquainted with that most diabolical riddle. But on that self-same night, and at some unearthly hour, I rose from a couch which had no rest for me. I sought, and obtained, a portrait of myself, in which—as I need hardly say—the artist had done me but scant justice. I placed that grinning photograph before me, and I said, pointing to it—"That fellow's father, *my* father—Zephaniah Coll—was Zephaniah Coll's son. Good. Thus, Zephaniah Coll—the father of the photograph—was the photograph's son. That is to say, Zephaniah Coll was his own s—! Wait a bit. This scrap of paper is the son; this other scrap of paper is the father of that son. Well, he—the son's father—son's *father;* keep that in mind, now—the father of this son was the son of my father. Now, this being the portrait of my honoured self, it follows that my father was the father of his own father!"

At this point I gave the thing up; and, now I know what I know, I am thankful for the determined courage which obliged me to do so.

But, on the following morning, my master summoned me to his desk, and demanded an answer to his enigma. I knew that there would be a fundamentally warm time it I failed to reply; therefore I answered boldly that I thought—*I* thought!—the solution was "Grandfather."



"HE BOLTED!"

"Grandfather!" said he; "is there an imminent softening of the cerebral tissues in that intellectual skull? Boy! it was himself; not his grandfather."

He took a sheet of paper; wrote upon it the words, "Son," "Father," "Father's Son"; airily dipped a pen into the inkpot; hovered with it over the written words, and began his demonstration. Said he—

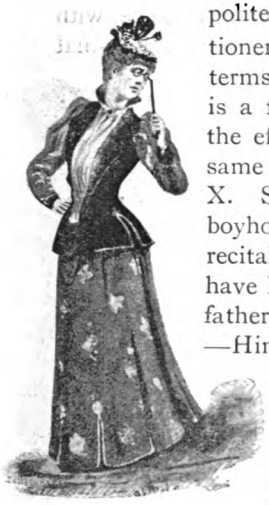
"If the man's father was the man's father's son, he must have been his own father's son, you blockhead—er—ah—that is—Let us begin again.

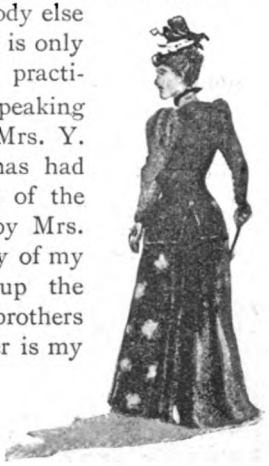
"It's the man's *father* who was the man's father's son, isn't it? Ha ha! Of course. Now then: I suppose you have a father, eh? Just so. Well, your father, don't you see, is your father's—"

My poor master leaned back in his seat and stared at his own handwriting. His face grew stern and pale, and I heard him murmur, "It is the plainest thing in the world; it is as apparent as the sun at noon-day." Then he went at it again; rumpled his hair, and bit at his fingers. Finally, he bolted clean out of the school, slammed the door that led to his house, and disappeared. During the afternoon we heard that he was confined to his bed, but, although he reappeared after an absence of three days, he was never the same man again.

I little thought, at the time, that I should live to thank him, with tears of gratitude, for the only riddle I ever heard him propound. Yet, so it is. Time has made me proud of my possession, and I would not exchange it for all the gold of Araby. Here are a few instances in which it forms an absolute mine of wealth.

I.—I give a little dinner, only to find that my guests regard each other with eyes of mutual and malignant hate. Somebody in the wholesale line declines to cotton to somebody else in the retail way. The churchwarden's wife is only politely tolerant of the local practitioner. Mrs. X. is not on speaking terms with Mrs. Y., because Mrs. Y. is a friend of Mrs. Z., who has had the effrontery to order a dress of the same material as that worn by Mrs. X. Suddenly, I tell this story of my boyhood's days, and finish up the recital by saying, "Sisters and brothers have I none; that man's father is my father's son. The answer is —Himself.





Then there comes a pause. I used to be alarmed when that pause occurred; but it has no terrors for me now. After five minutes or so of silence, there ensues the following debate:

"But, I say, it can't be *himself*, you know."

"Quite true," I reply, "but the answer is—Himself."

"What! the portrait of the fellow who said it?"

"Yes."

"Can't be. Must have been his grand-dad."

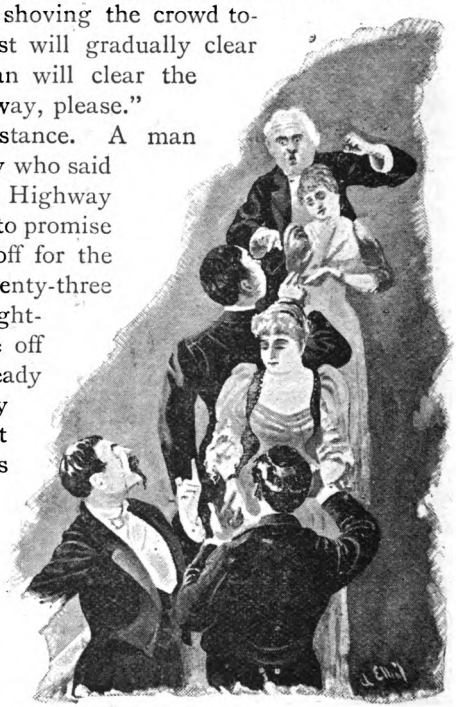
"Pardon me," says a voice, "I think you will see that the portrait was the portrait of the speaker's brother."

"How can that be?" thunders another; "sisters and brothers have I *none!*" And the interlocutor is smashed flat—as flat as a sole. I defy you to find anything much flatter.

After this episode the debate becomes general. Echoes of "my father's son"—"no brothers, don't you know"—"man's father"—"father's father's son," and a running refrain of "bosh!"—"pooh!"—"fiddle-de-dee!" occupy the remainder of the evening. There is nothing further for me to do, and I finish the meal in peace. A storm of words hurtles around me; but it moves me not. I only notice that the guests impatiently wave away the proffered dishes, and that the decanters maintain a constant level.

If any man desires to give a dinner on the cheap, and to enjoy

his own portion in silent satisfaction, let him ask my riddle as soon as the soup goes round. There need be no entertainment in the drawing-room afterwards; the guests will supply it all for themselves. The only difficulty will be to induce the combatants to depart. They will argue the thing all the way downstairs—some descending backwards while their opponents advance, with relentless pertinacity. There will be a final halt on the door-mat at the bottom; but, by gently shoving the crowd towards the open door, the host will gradually clear the hall; and the policeman will clear the street to the tune of "Pass away, please."



"THEY WILL ARGUE THE THING ALL THE WAY DOWNSTAIRS."

II.—Here is another instance. A man called upon me the other day who said he was the Poor Rate and the Highway Board. He was kind enough to promise that he would take himself off for the trifling consideration of twenty-three pounds four shillings and eightpence. He declined to take off the eightpence in return for ready money, notwithstanding my warning that the discount was necessary for his soul's health. When I found that argument and flattery were equally thrown away upon him, I, promptly and with malice aforethought, fired my riddle at him. He placed a rugged forefinger on his puckered brow, and then I left him.

During the afternoon I sent him in a cup of tea, giving strict orders that he should not be disturbed. At ten o'clock that night I visited him, but the cup of tea was untouched. He took no notice of me until I laid a hand upon his shoulder, when he looked up at me and said, "My father's son."

"Yes, yes," I said, "I know. But hadn't you better be going?" He rose wearily from his seat, and I led him by the arm to the front door. He was still repeating, "That man's father—my father's son," when I softly shut him out into the night.

Some days afterwards I enquired after my friend, but no one knew of his whereabouts. He has not been seen in these parts since that fatal day; and I still owe somebody twenty-three pounds four shillings and eightpence.

III.—One more. I have lately come into a legacy. A friend of mine sent a friend of his to me with a letter of introduction. *I now know why;* because the introduced man is one of the most pestilential bores I have ever come across. He has discovered the hours at which we sit down to our frugal meals, and he invariably makes a descent upon me five minutes before the gong summons us to the dining-room.

THE RATE COLLECTOR.

This man's conversation is personal—to himself. He is a crack shot, and he prides himself upon that fact. Amongst the partridges he performs miraculous feats, and thinks nothing of killing two brace at the expense of a couple of cartridges. Quite recently he came across five snipe. He shot six of them, with a keen regret that he failed to bag the remaining one. It is true that he winged it, but, somehow, it managed to get away. After he had informed me that he once shot a skylark which was out of sight, trusting to his ear to tell him where the songster was, I lent the young man a copy of Baron Munchausen; because I like to stimulate talent, especially in the young.

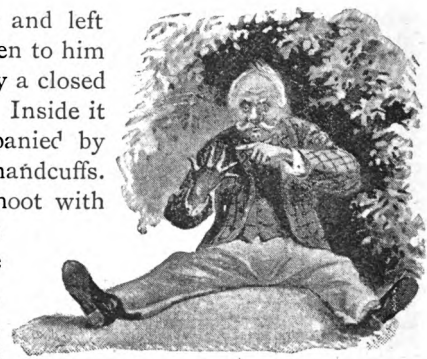
At last the recital of his many exploits palled upon me. It turned out that he was the original man who spitted six birds upon his ramrod, which he had carelessly left in one of the barrels of his gun, with no charge at the back of it. I said I thought that his gun was a breechloader; and his answer was, "So it is." I did not know, until that moment, how necessary it is to provide a ramrod for a breechloader. The end of it was that I took this bore (choke-bore) into a room one evening, and pointed to a picture. I said, "The original of that man had neither brother nor sister; yet that man's father was my father's son. The answer is—Himself."

After my friend had been gently conveyed into the outer air, I solaced myself with a vesper pipe, and bethought me of

other like victims. But my peace of mind was broken by a ceaseless monotone which seemed to come from the garden outside. Anxious to investigate matters, I strolled into the air and followed the sound until it led me to a rhododendron bush. Within that leafy shelter I found my bore—seated upon the ground. Three fingers of his left hand were pointed skywards; the forefinger of his right hand was tapping each in turn; while low to his own heart he tuned this melancholy ditty—

"My son's father was his brother's son-
Sisters and fathers had he none—
My son's sister was his father's son—
Sisters and brothers—"

I led him to the gateway and left him, and I have never spoken to him since. On the following day a closed carriage passed the house. Inside it was my poor victim, accompanied by a keeper and a pair of handcuffs. He has forgotten how to shoot with a ramrod, and spends his time in company with three small pieces of sealing-wax, which he calls his father, his son, and his father's son respectively. He has come to the conclusion that these three relationships are embodied in himself, and the bewildered doctors are at a loss to understand his meaning.



"THREE FINGERS OF HIS LEFT HAND WERE POINTED SKYWARDS."

I once met a man who said he could see through this riddle quite plainly. To my own mind, his statement only proved that he had graduated in a university of prevaricators. He carefully explained the position to me, and arrived at the false conclusion that the true answer was—"Uncle on the mother's side." He did not admit so much, but that was the issue to which his argument remorselessly led him.

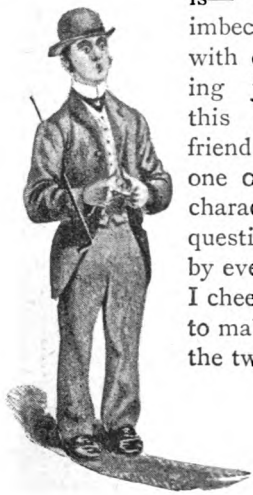
"You see it now, don't you?" he asked.

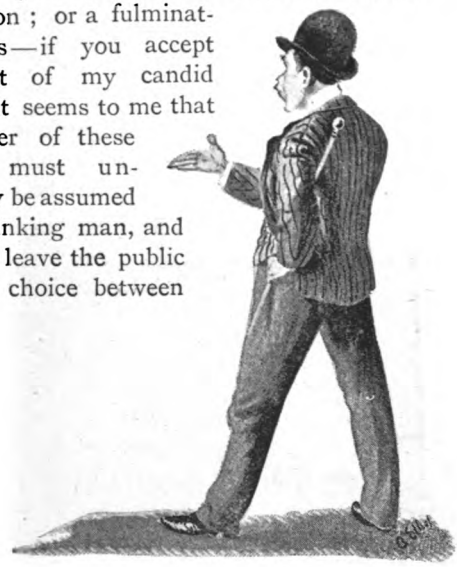
"No," I said, "I don't."

"Then," said he, "you *must* be a thundering ass!"

All objections to this conundrum, and its answer, simply amount to this. You are required to prove the identity of a man

with his own portrait. Now, any man who demands such a proof must be little better than an idiot. The only remaining question is—"Which do you prefer to be: a hopeless imbecile—if you attempt to reconcile answer with question; or a fulminating jackass—if you accept this verdict of my candid friend?" It seems to me that one or other of these characters must unquestionably be assumed by every thinking man, and I cheerfully leave the public to make its choice between the two.





Una at Desford.

By Barry Pain.

Illustrations by Sydney Cowell.

IT seemed at first the more curious to the fellows at Desford, because Langsdyke himself had left two years before. He was at Trinity, Cambridge, where he had taken a classical scholarship. What then, it was asked, could be the reason why

"'I BET YOU AN EVEN PENNY THAT SHE'S UGLY.'"

Langsdyke's mother and sister should stay for a week at the School House?

It was Tarlton who got the news first. He had rather a long nose, and shirked everything, except his daily food and anything that was not his own business. He had been in the sick-room for

the longest possible time that no cough at all worth mentioning would keep him there. While he was in the sick-room he extracted from the matron as much information as he could on any subject which did not, directly or indirectly, concern him; amongst other things he heard of the visit of Langsdyke's people. In all probability they, like other visitors, would lunch when the boys dined, in the dining-hall, and not in that wing of the School House which formed the headmaster's private residence. Therefore the boys would see them.

"Now, look here," said Tarlton, before luncheon, to Digby, to whom he had been communicating the news, "what do you think

"SHE ATE HOT MUTTON AND POTATOES."

The Celestial's sister is like?" During his career at Desford, Langsdyke had been generally known as The Celestial. "I shouldn't mind betting a penny that she's pretty."

"I'm taking that," said Digby, meditatively. "I bet you an even penny that she's ugly." He reflected that the greater number of girls who had come under his observation were not beautiful. At evens, it seemed to him a singularly satisfactory bet. It is difficult to apologise for such conduct. Tarlton was not a very nice boy, although he got on hideously well with masters in school, but Digby certainly had his points. The fact is that boys in the fourth form have not as a rule learnt reverence; they would speak slightingly of the Pyramids.

At luncheon, Mrs. Langsdyke and her daughter sat at the headmaster's table, as had been surmised. Afterwards no one remembered anything about Mrs. Langsdyke, except that she looked kindly, and called her daughter Una; the latter was the more important point. Una Langsdyke had very dark hair and fine blue eyes. You noticed her hair, which was abundant, and her eyes, which were large, first of all; if you had had a coldly critical mind, you might have gone on to remark that her features were beautifully regular, but it was more human to feel that she had a certain way with her—to be generally indefinite and deeply impressed. She had possibly honoured time by existing for about twenty-three years. She did not look quite so old as that. She talked quietly, rapidly, easily; she smiled occasionally. She ate hot mutton and potatoes—such things were shamefully unworthy of her, but she did not seem to mind. Digby looked at her sorrowfully; for he remembered that he had betted one penny that she was not pretty.

"'WHAT ARE YOU GRINNING AT, YOU YOUNG APE?'"

He came up to Tarlton afterwards, and pressed fourpence and a stamp into his hand. "A penny wouldn't express it," he said, gloomily. "I ought to pay more, but that's all I've got. And I'm sorry I made that bet."

Tarlton was amused; he was still being amused when Johnnie Dunham passed him, proceeding with the dignity of a good football player to his own study. Each boy in the sixth at Desford had a small study to himself; one or two in the upper fifth also had their own studies. The rest of the school worked in the day-rooms of respective houses.

"Tarlton," said Johnnie Dunham, severely, "what are you kicking up that row about? What are you grinning at, you young ape?"

Tarlton explained the joke, when quite suddenly he found that his ears were being boxed. This checked his gaiety and general joy in life.

"Now," said Johnnie, leaning against the wall of the corridor, with his hands in his pockets, "send Digby to me."

Digby came. He did not always miscalculate the chances. Johnnie Dunham was generally good humour itself; but if he sent for a lower boy it was much better for the lower boy to go with promptitude. Digby was aware that it would only add to the unpleasantness if he did not go. He received his chastisement stoically.

"Cheek's what's the matter with you," said Johnnie Dunham, savagely, "undiluted, infernal cheek. If you must insult visitors to the house, you'd better not come and brag about it to *me*. Do you hear?"

The accusation of bragging was not strictly just, but then Johnnie was for once distinctly angry. Digby watched him as he disappeared up the wide stone staircase, and then he turned round upon Tarlton.

"Look here, Tarlton," he said, with an air of exaggerated calm, "another time when you want a licking—when you're hungry for it, crying for it, and can't do without it—just try and get yourself a plain licking all to yourself, without dragging me into it. Otherwise, you may get *two* lickings, and the second one will hurt you badly."

"What do you mean?" asked Tarlton, aghast.

"Oh, what do I mean? Indeed!" said Digby, with fine irony. "Well, Johnnie Dunham sat next to The Celestial's sister at luncheon, and was introduced to her. Johnnie Dunham was talking to her fit to break his neck all the time. Johnnie Dunham opened the door for her when she went out. Then you go and tell him *that*. You're a genius—you silly toad!" Digby turned away in disgust, and was taken with misogyny.

It was Saturday afternoon, and there was a house-match. When Desford played the rival school, Chorlswich, the game was undoubtedly warm. But for good, hard, hot play, the house-matches left school matches far behind. The rivalry between the different houses was intense, and each member of the respective teams played as if his life and honour depended upon it. This afternoon the School House was playing Graham's, and it was expected that the School House would win fairly easily. The headmaster's wife and her visitors were on the ground to watch the game.

The two best players for the School House were Crichton, who captained the team, and Johnnie Dunham; both of them played three-quarters.

But this afternoon Johnnie seemed to have gone hopelessly wrong. He perpetually fumbled the ball; he seemed to be physically incapable of picking it up clean. The ground was not greasy, and there was not an atom of excuse for him. When he got the ball he seemed to have no more dash in him than a piece of damp blotting-paper; he hesitated, ran back, got collared, and then passed wildly. Crichton groaned for sheer bitterness of spirit. What was the world coming to, when Johnnie Dunham behaved like this? When half-time was called Crichton spoke to Johnnie.

"THE HEADMASTER'S WIFE AND HER VISITORS WATCHED THE GAME."

"I say, old man, what on earth's the matter with you? I never saw such a sight in my life. For goodness' sake, when you *do* get the ball, don't stand staring at it like a sick cat. And what do you mean by passing forward that way?"

"I don't know," said Johnnie, sadly. "I'm not proud of it, but I've got no more nerve. I'll go up in the scrimmage, if you like."

Crichton sent him forward, and put Douglas in his place behind. Soon afterwards a fortunate thing happened for Johnnie Dunham. He got badly hacked by accident, and he thought that he heard feminine laughter. That disturbed his temper—not enough to make him lose his judgment, but quite enough to make him play with great spirit and use his very considerable strength. After

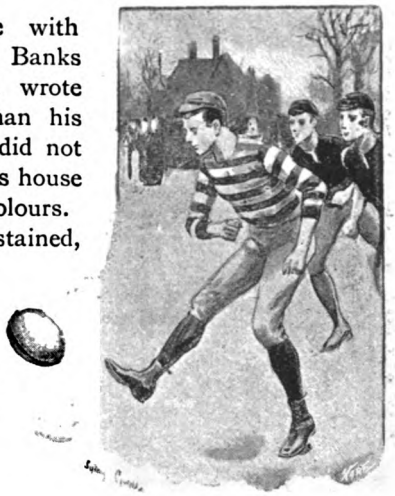
that, he was always on the ball. It need only be said that during the latter half Graham's team simply went to pieces, and the School House won. By the end of the match, Johnnie Dunham had redeemed himself.

He walked up to the house with Crichton, Douglas, and Banks. Banks edited the school magazine, and wrote poetry; his football was better than his poetry, and both were bad. He did not play for the school, but he was in his house team. The other three all had their colours.

Douglas was dishevelled, blood-stained, and cheerful.

"I'm thankful that this is Saturday afternoon," he said. "I'm done. Two hours with Wynne this afternoon would just about kill me."

"Do you remember?" asked Banks, although it had nothing to do with the previous remark, "The Celestial had a photograph of her up in his study, but it wasn't much like her."



"HE WAS ALWAYS ON THE BALL."

"Like her!" exclaimed Crichton. "I should enjoy a few minutes with that photographer. I'd smother him with his own black velveteen rag."

"She was backing the School House all the time," said Dunham. "She was awfully glad that we won."

"That's because The Celestial was School House."

"*May* be," said Dunham, meditatively. He preferred to hope otherwise.

They reached the house, bathed in ice-cold water, changed their clothes, and then met in Banks's study. It was the most luxurious study in the house. The paternal Banks suffered from a terrible amount of wealth, and was indiscreetly liberal in the matter of pocket-money. It was small, and when the four boys were in it was almost inconveniently crowded. With the exception of Douglas, all of the four were in the sixth. They generally went about together, and were known as The Quartette. Banks made coffee, really excellent coffee; they drank it, and eat dream-like wafer biscuits. "They give you a lot of work, before you feel that you've eaten anything," said Crichton, critically. Banks

never forgot that he wrote poetry, and was nothing if he was not ethereal, although he did not look it.

The conversation turned on the subject of marriage. Do not be surprised at this. If you think that boys of seventeen and eighteen talk like children in the nursery, you have been misled by certain stories of school life. If you think, even, that a boy of seventeen talks like a boy of fourteen, you are mistaken. In less than a year these four boys would be taking the rank of men at one of the two Universities. They would have acquired the taste

"BANKS MADE COFFEE."

for tobacco, and lost the taste for sweet things. Otherwise they would not have changed very much. Now they talked more like undergraduates than like children. No further allusion was made to Una Langsdyke, but it seemed to be the general opinion that it was better for a man to marry a woman a few years older than himself. "Then she steadies him more. I wish I didn't ever swear," said Johnnie Dunham, rather pathetically. It was also agreed that it was only the *first* love-affair which was intensely and terribly real.

When the other three had gone, Banks, left alone in his study, began to write verses. They implied that she did not care, and never would care. But that did not matter; it was, he pointed out, a similar devotion to that which existed in days that were olden for lovely maidens whose hair was golden; when, moreover, a knight's heart might break for his true love's sake, but the knight suffered and died profusely in silence. Crichton went down to the day-room, where there was a piano; he played a modern waltz that yearned, and thirsted, and went into the minor, and was not at all difficult. He kept the soft pedal down all the time; this seemed to him to put more real soul into the thing. Douglas attempted to sketch a face from memory, and failed. Johnnie Dunham contented himself with reading the ecstatic pages of "Strathmore."

"SHE WAS UNCONSCIOUSLY EFFECTIVE."

Yes, there was a certain feeling abroad, and all these four boys were down with it.

The debating society, of which the headmaster was president, met that night in the dining-hall. There were some ladies present, visitors, by way of audience. Amongst them was Una Langsdyke. There had been a dinner party at the headmaster's house that night; she was in evening dress, and unconsciously effective. In debate it appeared that Crichton was entirely dissatisfied with the Government; he wished the house to express a feeling that it had no confidence in the Government; he lashed the Government; he exposed the Government; he showed up all the little plans that the Government had wanted to keep dark. He gave the house ten minutes of fine free eloquence, with a dash of statistics in it. Johnnie Dunham replied; he supported the Government; it was the patriot's duty always to support everything to his dying breath; he was rather glorious, but not particularly argumentative. Then Banks rose to explain that, personally, his heart bled for Ireland. But was he entirely happy about Egypt? On the whole his heart bled for Egypt, also. He quoted Swinburne, and darkly hinted that he (Banks) had himself a sympathy with even the Nihilist—that was because his heart bled for Russia.

Now all this time Una Langsdyke had not paid the least attention to the debate. She applauded formally at the close of each speech, but she evidently was not listening to the speakers. She looked bored. Then Mr. Gerald Wynne rose to speak, and her appearance changed. She leaned forward and listened eagerly, intently.

"What did you think of my speech?" Banks asked afterwards. "I hadn't prepared a word; it was all just as it came."

"You run too much to poetry," said Douglas, kindly but critical. "That's where you slip up. She didn't take any notice of your speech. I believe she was asleep."

"WYNNE ROSE TO SPEAK."

"She didn't take any notice of anybody except Wynne," said Johnnie Dunham, bitterly. "She isn't interested in any of us. She didn't really care tuppence about the house-match; it was all put on."

"She wasn't looking so well as she did at luncheon," said Banks.

"That's a lie," Johnnie Dunham replied, promptly. "She looked a good deal better. She made me talk about Wynne at luncheon, too." And all four went off to bed, dejectedly.

That night Tarlton, of the long nose and the inquisitive ways, had a relapse. He coughed twice distinctly. Now Tarlton was particularly careful of himself; so he went to the sick-room next morning, and complained huskily. He thought that black-currant jelly would be good for his throat. If the jelly was put by his side, he could help himself when he felt that he wanted it. As it was raining it would be sheer madness for him to go down to service at the school chapel. He was quite positive about that. Tarlton was ejected from the sick-room, as a gross and disgraceful fraud, that afternoon. But during his short illness he had used his opportunities. He had found out why the Langsdykes had come to stay at the School House.

Tarlton entered the day-room with an air of importance. He was not much liked, and the group of boys gathered there did not receive him kindly. "Tarlton, you toad," said Digby, "been shamming and getting leave off everything, as usual?"

"I had a cough," said Tarlton, with dignity.

"Get out," replied Digby. "Get out of this, and go outside in the corridor. I'm sick of you."

"I was going to have told you," said Tarlton, "about The Celestial's sister. I know why she's here. I know all about it. It would surprise you. However, it doesn't matter. I can go out in the corridor and tell someone else."

Digby took Tarlton gently into chancery. "Now then," said Digby, "your head's under my arm, and I can screw your jaw until you really will have something the matter with you. What's your news?"

"DIGBY TOOK TARLTON GENTLY INTO CHANCERY."

Under these circumstances, Tarlton thought it advisable to state what he had heard. Una Langsdyke was engaged to Wynne—had been engaged to him for some months. Then Tarlton went back to the sick-room, and said that he had been hurt and was unable to masticate; he took an early opportunity of disproving this latter statement.

The news, in the meantime, spread rapidly, until it reached The Quartette, gathered in Banks's study. They sat in silence for a few seconds, and then Crichton spoke:

"Of course, I knew what was up all along. It's no news to me."

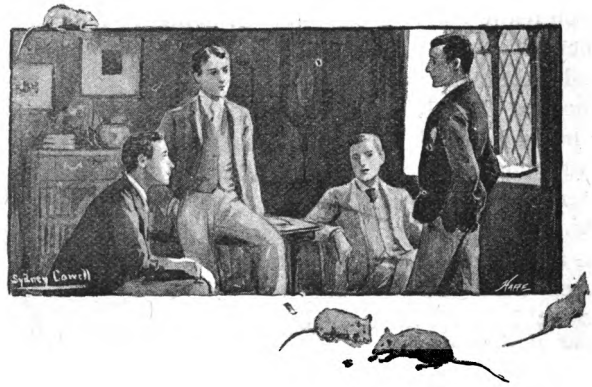
"Well," said Douglas, "I don't see how any girl's ever going to be happy with Wynne. I've never had a moment's peace with him yet myself, and Greek Testament with him is simply the hereafter."

"Don't think me conceited," said Banks, "but I must say that The Celestial's sister never quite realised my ideal of beauty."

"Didn't she?" said Johnnie. "She'd be sorry to hear that.

How would it be if we were to get some ferrets and go out after rats now and again?"

From which it may be gathered that there are four distinct methods of consolation possible to man.



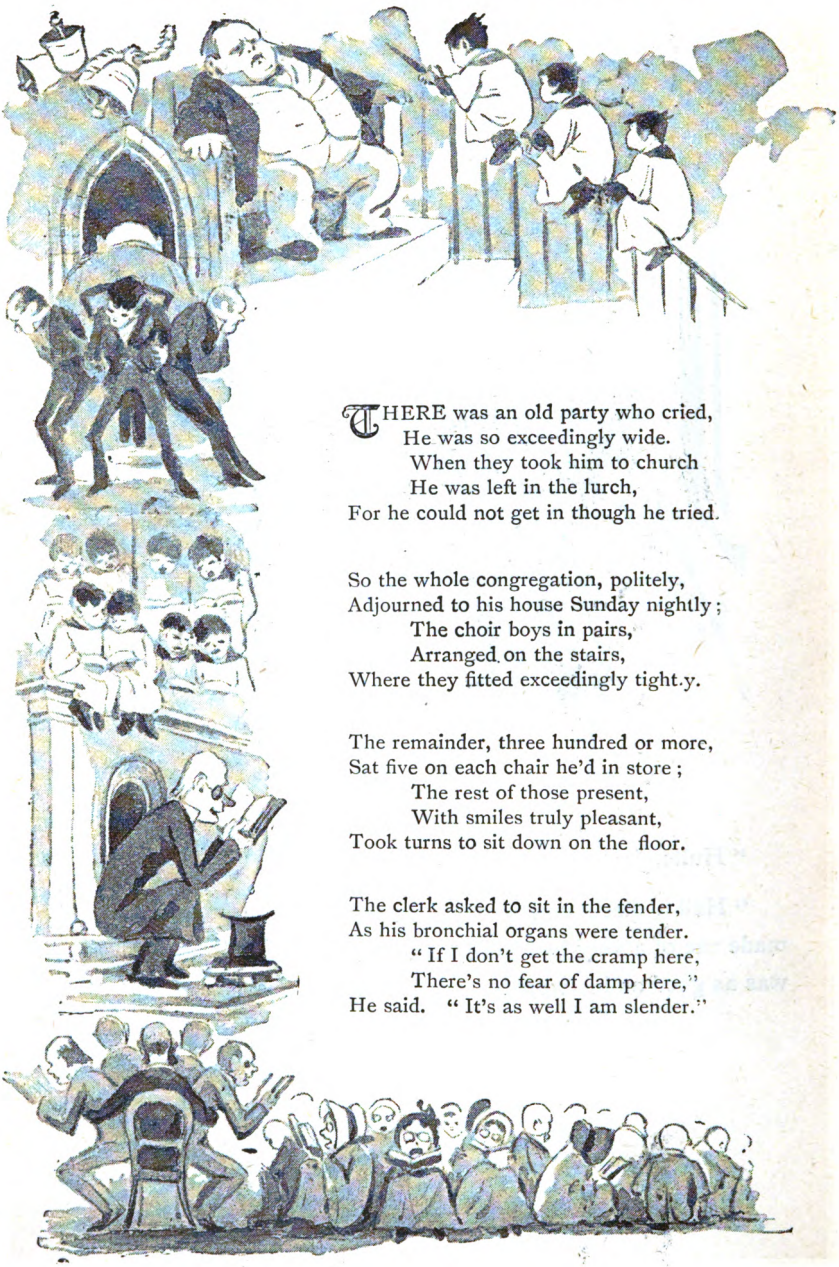
A Standard of Excellence.

"Hullo, Jones, what's come to your eye?"

"Had a discussion about rent with a tenant of mine. He made use of a very bad word, and said he'd black my eye—and he was as good as his word!"

Nonsense Verses.

By M. K. H. Illustrations by Cynicus.

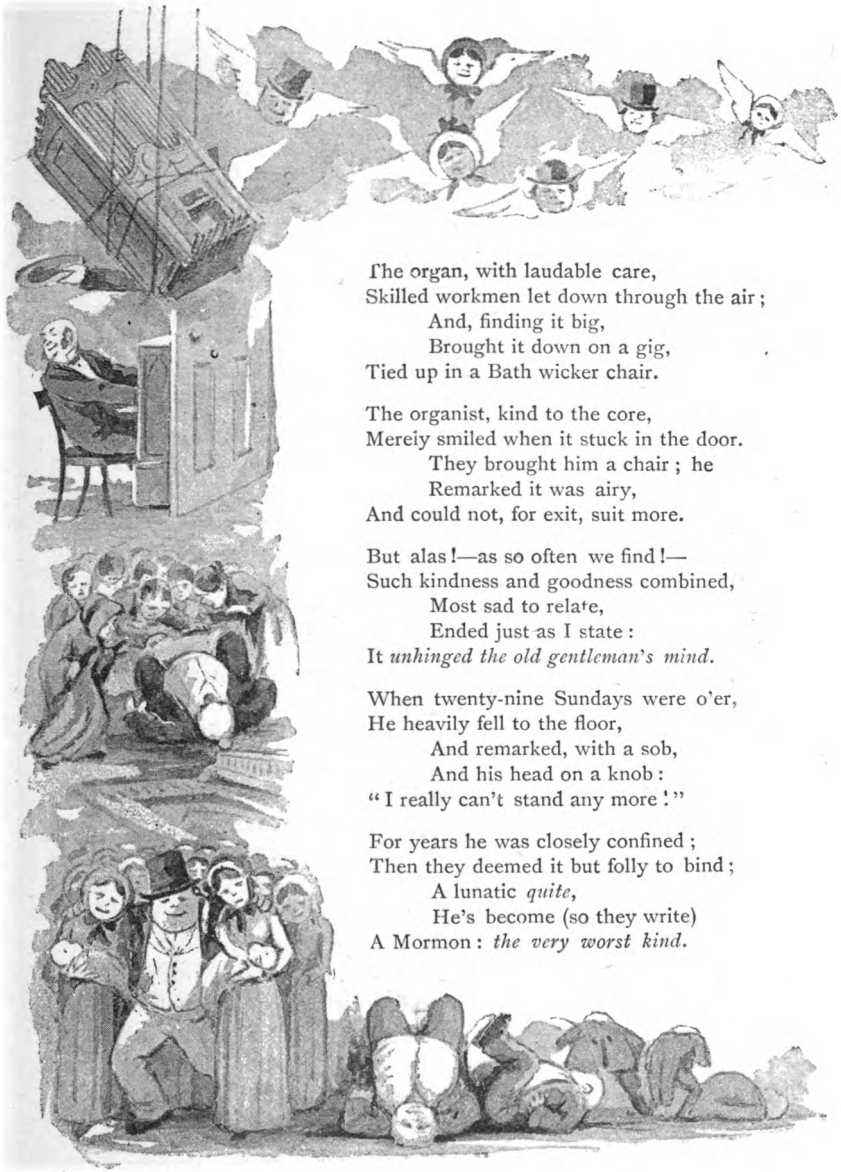


THERE was an old party who cried,
He was so exceedingly wide.
When they took him to church
He was left in the lurch,
For he could not get in though he tried.

So the whole congregation, politely,
Adjourned to his house Sunday nightly;
The choir boys in pairs,
Arranged on the stairs,
Where they fitted exceedingly tightly.

The remainder, three hundred or more,
Sat five on each chair he'd in store;
The rest of those present,
With smiles truly pleasant,
Took turns to sit down on the floor.

The clerk asked to sit in the fender,
As his bronchial organs were tender.
"If I don't get the cramp here,
There's no fear of damp here,"
He said. "It's as well I am slender."



The organ, with laudable care,
Skilled workmen let down through the air;
And, finding it big,
Brought it down on a gig,
Tied up in a Bath wicker chair.

The organist, kind to the core,
Mereiy smiled when it stuck in the door.
They brought him a chair; he
Remarked it was airy,
And could not, for exit, suit more.

But alas!—as so often we find!—
Such kindness and goodness combined,
Most sad to relate,
Ended just as I state:
It *unhinged the old gentleman's mind.*

When twenty-nine Sundays were o'er,
He heavily fell to the floor,
And remarked, with a sob,
And his head on a knob:
"I really can't stand any more!"

For years he was closely confined;
Then they deemed it but folly to bind;
A lunatic *quite*,
He's become (so they write)
A Mormon: *the very worst kind.*

Christmas Presents.

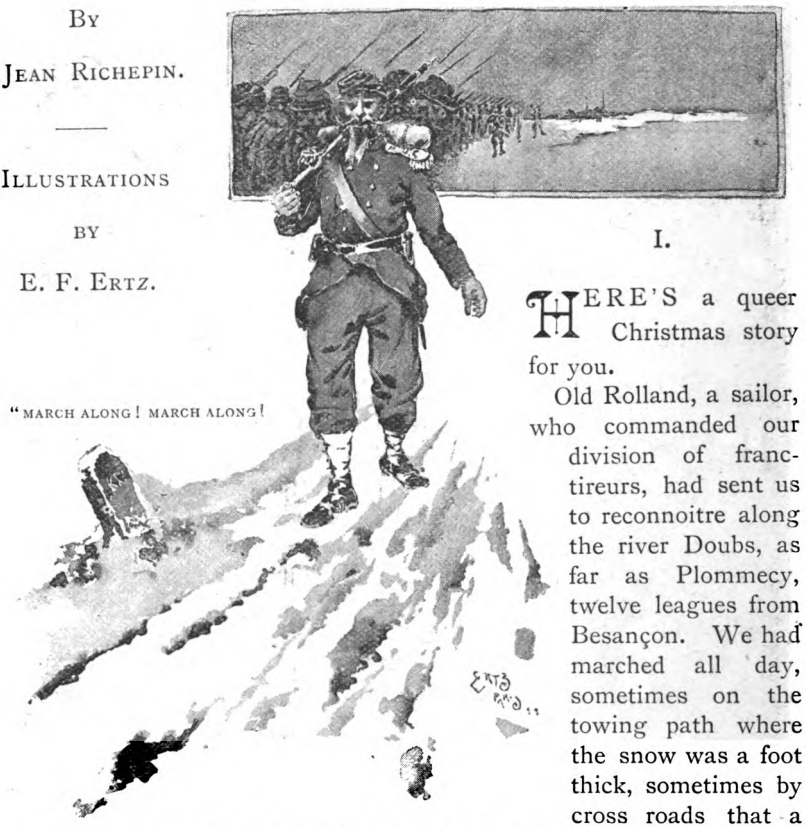
By

Jean Richepin.

Illustrations

by

E. F. Ertz.



"March along! March along!

I.

THERE'S a queer Christmas story for you.

Old Rolland, a sailor, who commanded our division of franc-tireurs, had sent us to reconnoitre along the river Doubs, as far as Plommecy, twelve leagues from Besançon. We had marched all day, sometimes on the towing path where the snow was a foot thick, sometimes by cross roads that a drove of cattle had made mere sloughs of mud. Thanks to the windings of the river, we had marched more than ten leagues since four in the morning, when we reached Plommecy as night fell. We dragged along, tired, depressed and silent, with the heavy regular tread of weary soldiers, hitching up our knapsacks every now and then to keep them in place. An old smuggler, whom we called the Sapper because of his big beard, had alone preserved his spirits. He walked as briskly and firmly as ever, and under his moustache, covered with icicles, he hummed his everlasting refrain:

My coat has two buttons,
March along, march along;
My coat has three buttons,
Lightly march along.

We plucked up heart a little as we drew near Plommecy, and saw on the river side the snow-covered roofs showing white against the dull gray sky.

"Come along, come along," cried the Sapper; "put your best feet foremost, my boys," and then he rolled out:

Will there be a drop to drink up there,
Will there be a drop to drink?

whereupon we quickened our pace.

We scarcely thought of the Prussians. Though we had been trudging about since morning to get wind of their whereabouts, we had neither heard nor seen anything of them.

They came to our recollection, however, when we reached the outskirts of the village. No movement, no light—the silence of death. Were they in ambush there waiting for us? Each man held his rifle ready, and had his finger on the trigger. The stiff limbs grew supple, the tired bodies regained their vigour, and we made our way between the first houses ready to refresh ourselves after a day of marching by a night of combat.

"Why this is a regular cemetery," said someone after awhile. "Let us knock at this door and see if we can get to know what's up. We shall find somebody to speak to at any rate, if it's only with bullets."

We knocked, but there was no answer. We knocked at another door, still no sign of reply. The third door our Lieutenant kicked open, and then entered the house revolver in hand. Ten men followed him, the rest of us remained in the street to keep guard.

In three minutes our comrades reappeared, looking ill at ease. The house was quite empty. Two or three more were searched with the same result; the village was abandoned.

"Devil take it!" said the Lieutenant; "the Prussians have been here while we were staring at the river. The inhabitants have probably made their way to Baume. We shall have to keep a sharp look out to-night."

He placed a sentry at each end of the street, and another at the corner of the road which led to the plain, then he led the rest of us towards the most important looking farmstead, in order that we might cook our supper, and make arrangements for getting a little sleep, if it might be.

Directly he opened the great gate of the courtyard all our suspicions were confirmed. It was there that the Prussians had lodged. A ferry-boat was lying bottom upwards in the yard;

THE THIRD DOOR OUR LIEUTENANT KICKED OPEN.'

many bundles of hay had been thrown from the loft, and were strewn about the ground; the door of the cellar had been broken open, and empty bottles were scattered here and there amidst dirty and trampled straw. A party of Uhlans had passed the night in the courtyard, while their officers had occupied the house.

We rushed inside and found the table covered with dirty plates, half empty glasses, and bottles with their necks broken off; all the remains of a gluttonous orgy. In the fireplace a heap of logs was still burning. The bed was unmade, and looked indeed as if it had been turned inside out, and muddy boots had defiled the sheets of fine white linen.

While the Lieutenant was deliberating as to whether there was no means of pursuing the blackguards, the Sapper, who had gone to search for eggs in the stable, called to us from the bottom of the yard. We hastened thither, and found him trying to comfort a little boy of twelve or thirteen years of age, who was crying as if his heart would break. The Sapper, kissing him and stifling the child's sobs in his great beard, was saying:

"Don't cry—I promise you that we will catch them. I'll give you one of them to kill—don't cry."

We were puzzled at first, but the Lieutenant having lighted a lantern which illuminated the whole stable, we understood all. In a corner near the manger lay the dead bodies of a man and a woman, hand in hand, and behind them on the wall were two large splashes of blood and brains. And the poor little boy continued to call for his father and mother, without listening to the Sapper's words of comfort.

When he saw us, however, he became calmer, and was able at last to tell his story. The inhabitants, with the exception of his father and mother, had left the village three days before on hearing of the approach of the Uhlans. The Prussians had pillaged everything, and at the moment of their departure his father had not been able to refrain from insulting the officer. The officer had struck the old man, who returned the blow, and there was a struggle, after which the officer had caused the mother and father to be led into the stable, where he had blown out their brains with his revolver.

"I shall know him again," concluded the child, "oh, I shall know him again, the brigand, and I shall kill him too."

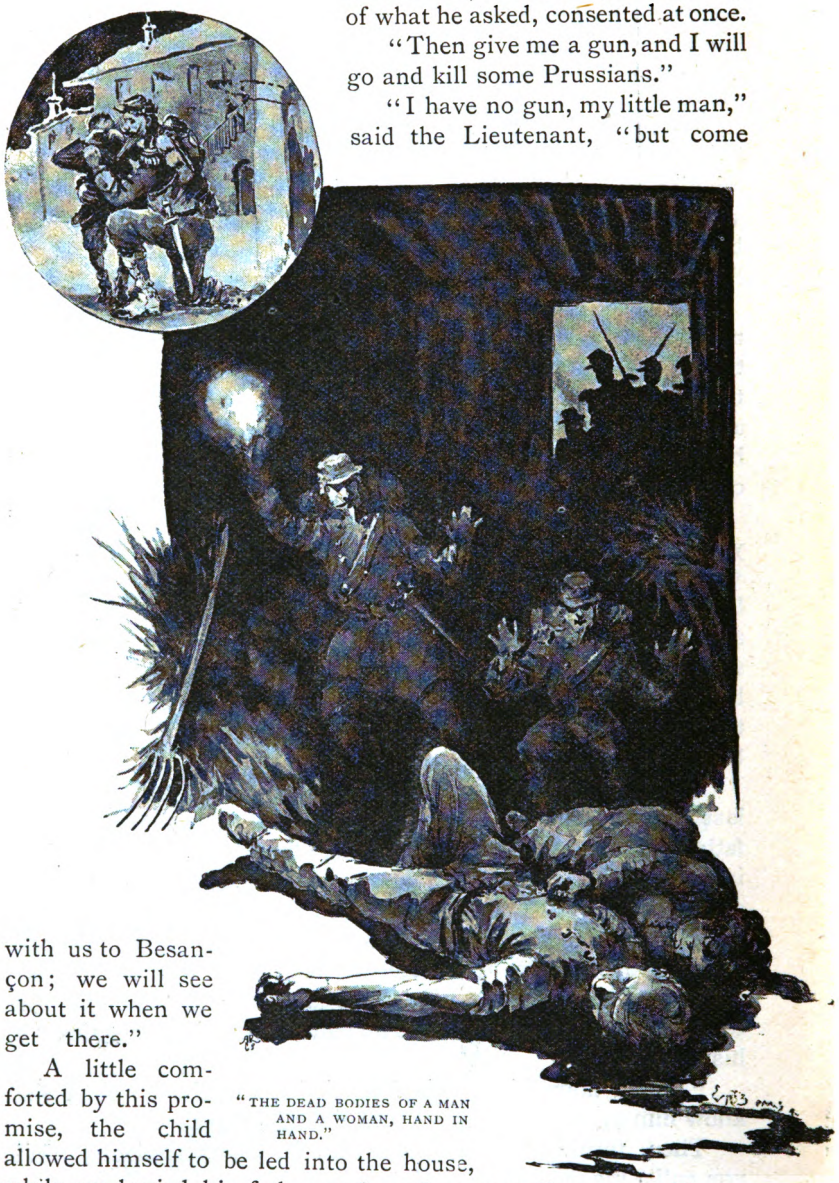
Then, turning to the Lieutenant, he asked suddenly, "Will you enlist me in your franc-tireurs?"

The Lieutenant, seeing that it would be cruel to leave the poor

little fellow, and that there would be time in the future to make him understand the impracticability of what he asked, consented at once.

"Then give me a gun, and I will go and kill some Prussians."

"I have no gun, my little man," said the Lieutenant, "but come with us to Besançon; we will see about it when we get there."



"THE DEAD BODIES OF A MAN AND A WOMAN, HAND IN HAND."

A little comforted by this promise, the child allowed himself to be led into the house, while we buried his father and mother as well as we could.

On the morrow he returned with us, and as after five or six

leagues he was tired out, the Sapper put him astride his knapsack, and carried him to the end of the journey, marching always with his brisk, firm step, and humming his everlasting refrain:

My coat has a hundred buttons,
March along, march along;
My coat has a hundred and one buttons,
Lightly march along.

"PUT HIM ASTRIDE HIS KNAPSACK."

II.

For a few days the boy lived with us, and nobody had the courage to tell him that children of thirteen could not be enlisted as franc-tireurs. Each day he grew more urgent to have a rifle, and more annoyed that he was not dressed and armed like a soldier.

"If you go away to-morrow," said he, "I shan't be ready, and then you won't want to take me with you."

It happened to be Christmas Eve, and we were going to have a little party at the house of the brave fellow where ten of us lodged at Chaprois, a suburb of Besançon. The boy, of course, was to be present; we thought it would cheer him up a bit. So he was put to bed at seven o'clock, and we promised to come and wake him at midnight.

I was there at half-past eleven, and I went up into the chamber where the orphan was sleeping, in order to leave the lower room free for Mother Gaudot, who was getting things ready for the party. The child still slept, and my light did not wake him. The place was cold, and I turned my eyes mechanically to the fireplace.

Oh, the strength of early habits! Forgetting his sorrow, the child had put his shoes on the hearth, as in the happy days when Father Christmas had brought him his Christmas gift. The poor little fellow did not know that, his mother being dead, Father Christmas was dead too; but there he slept tranquilly, awaiting his present with confidence. How cruelly he would be undeceived when he woke. Now that his parents were killed, and he was alone in the world, even Father Christmas had forsaken him!

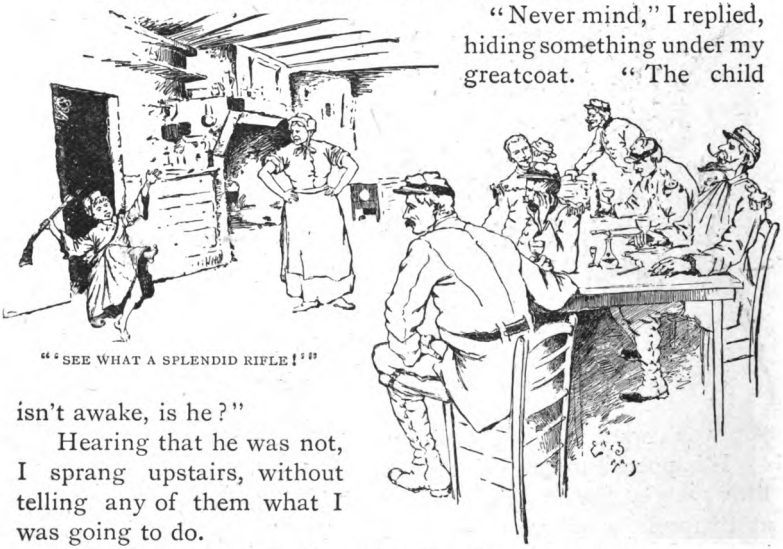
Suddenly an idea struck me. I ran downstairs, and cried to the old woman: "Mother Gaudot, the little boy is still asleep. Don't let them wake him before I come back. And ask them not to begin the fun without me."

Then I hurried off to the arsenal, where I happened to know one of the head armourers.

A few minutes after midnight I was back again, and everybody was there awaiting me.

"What's in the wind now?" asked the Sapper as I entered.

"Never mind," I replied, hiding something under my greatcoat. "The child isn't awake, is he?"



"'SEE WHAT A SPLENDID RIFLE!'"

Hearing that he was not, I sprang upstairs, without telling any of them what I was going to do.

"Now you can call him," I said, when I came down again, "but call him from this room."

They shouted his name, and hammered the ceiling, and in a moment down he came all radiant. He was in his nightdress, but he had a soldier's cap on his head, and a cartridge-box at his side, and he was waving a little cavalry Chassepot.

'Long live Father Christmas!" he cried. "See what a splendid rifle he has given me."

III.

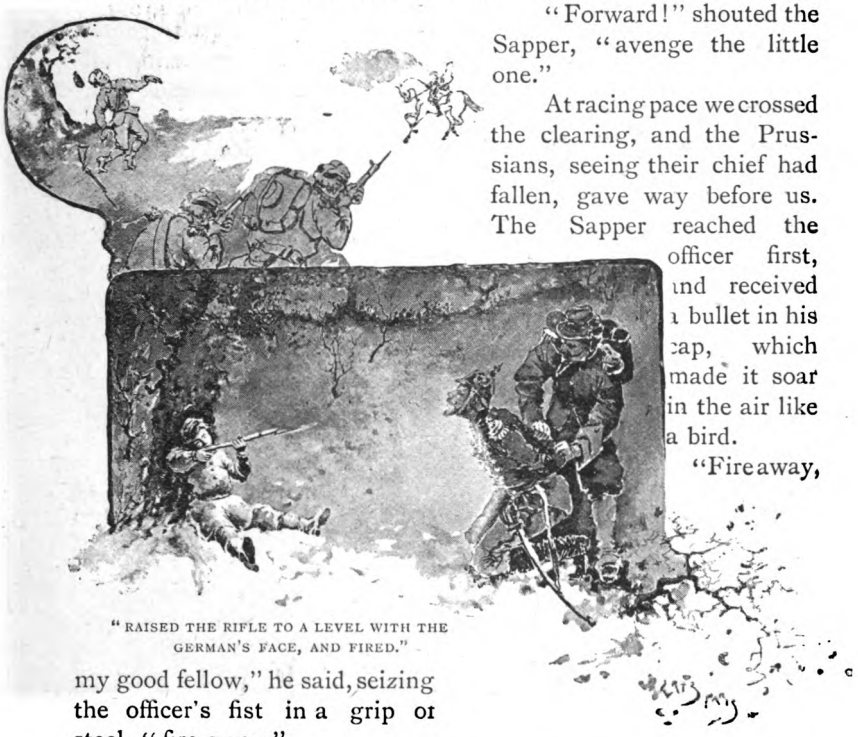
The next day we went away on an expedition. Four days later, early in the morning, we found the Prussians in a wood, near Belfort, and there was a skirmish. So thick a mist hung about the underwood that we could scarcely see each other, except when it was scattered by the rifle-flashes. All at once the boy gave a great shout:

"There he is—there he is—I see him there behind that great oak!"

He pointed to a single tree, in a small clearing, behind which there seemed to be a horseman moving. He had recognised the officer of Uhlans, and would instantly have rushed upon him, but the movement he made exposed him, and he fell with a ball in his breast. The officer had shot him with his revolver.

"Dirty coward!" said the Sapper, and with a firm hand he brought his rifle slowly to his shoulder.

Crack! The officer's horse had a foreleg broken, and fell, bringing his master down under him.



"RAISED THE RIFLE TO A LEVEL WITH THE GERMAN'S FACE, AND FIRED."

"Forward!" shouted the Sapper, "avenge the little one."

At racing pace we crossed the clearing, and the Prussians, seeing their chief had fallen, gave way before us. The Sapper reached the officer first, and received a bullet in his cap, which made it soar in the air like a bird.

"Fire away, my good fellow," he said, seizing the officer's fist in a grip of steel, "fire away."

The four remaining chambers of the revolver emptied themselves into the air, and the Sapper, dragging his prisoner from under the horse, put a knee on his chest.

"Bring the little one," he cried.

But the boy was almost at his last gasp.

"We can't bring him," shouted one of the men, "he's dying."

"Sacrebleu!" said the Sapper, "but it will never do for him to die without being satisfied."

And hoisting the German in his arms he carried him to where the child lay. He revived for a moment at the sight, and a smile of joy passed over his face.

"Coward—coward!" he murmured.

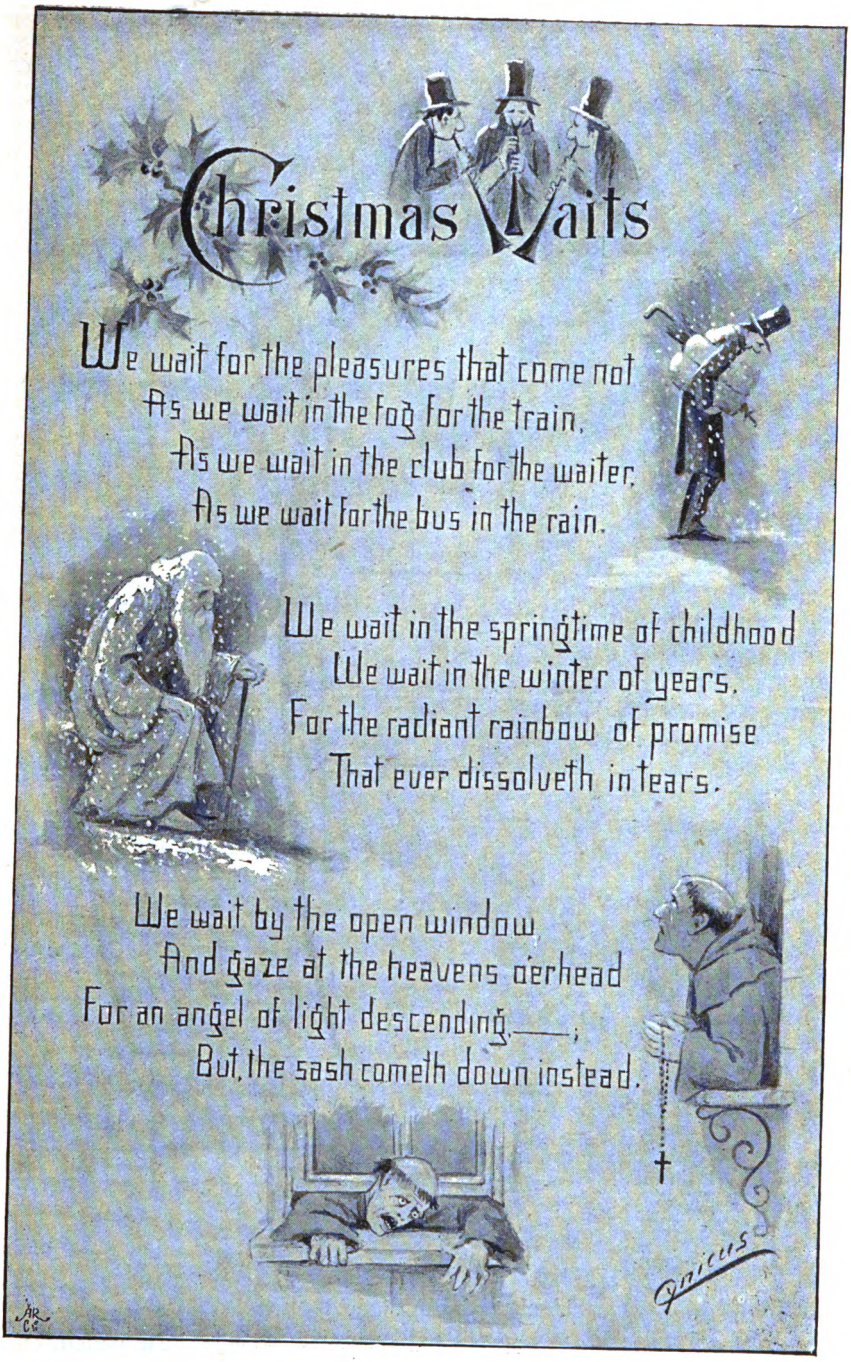
They had seated him against a tree, and the Sapper held the officer kneeling before him.

"Kill him, my dear," he cried, "kill him! You know I promised you should."

The child tried vainly to lift the Chassepot lying on the ground at his feet. At length, with a sudden movement, gathering all his strength for this last effort, he raised the rifle to a level with the German's face, and fired.

The weapon fell to the ground, and the boy lay dead beside the dead officer.

"Poor little chap!" said the Sapper huskily—"but he has had some beautiful Christmas presents all the same."

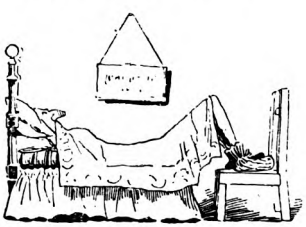

Christmas Waits
We wait for the pleasures that come not
As we wait in the fog for the train,
As we wait in the club for the waiter,
As we wait for the bus in the rain.
We wait in the springtime of childhood
We wait in the winter of years,
For the radiant rainbow of promise
That ever dissolveth in tears.
We wait by the open window
And gaze at the heavens o'erhead
For an angel of light descending,—;
But the sash cometh down instead.
Quicus

By M. Babington Bayley.

Illustrations by Scott Rankin.

TWO clergymen, some years ago
(Precisely when I do not know),
Came from across the deep blue sea
To Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

The Reverend Hezekiah Drum,
He settled down at Tweedledum;



The Reverend Jeremiah Gee,
He did the same at Tweedledee.

They both were righteous, godly men—
For clergymen *were* clergy, then—
And truthfully 'twas said of each:
He'd always practise what he'd preach.

They strove with unremitting zeal
The spiritually sick
to heal;
They preached, they prayed,
they sang, they taught,
And never gave to self
a thought.

The worthy folk of Tweedledum
Thought none so good as Mr. Drum;

The pious ones at Tweedledee
Were just as proud of Mr. Gee.

In fact, it must be owned they were
In very truth a goodly pair;

And when they met, with friendly grip,
They talked in Christian fellowship.

Yet, though they
were so very good,
And though they knew
full well they should
Each other love,
I grieve to tell,
They did not love
each other well.

They tried to, but they tried in vain :
For envy turned their love to pain.
Where envy reigns love still must halt ;
'Twas their misfortune, not their fault.

It's true that envy is a sin ;
But Drum was stout and Gee was thin ;
And Drum a slender man would be,
While fatness charmed the soul of Gee.

About a mile from Tweedledum
There dwelt a wizard, known to Drum ;
And on a day the clergymen
Together journeyed to his den.

The wizard looked them up and down,
Surveying them from heel to crown ;
At length he spoke : "I only see
One thing that I can do," said he.

"And that ?" they spoke with bated breath,
Hanging upon his words like death.
"Is this : to boil you down to glue,
And make one body out of two."

They shuddered. "Yes!" he said, "I fear
You'll find the boiling down severe!
Of course," he said, "you grasp the plan?
The body'll only hold one man.

"And whether Drum, or whether Gee,
Or each alternately," said he,

"Shall occupy that body, you
Must fix before I make the glue."

"Your glue don't hesitate to make;
Alternate weeks of life we'll take,"
Said Gee. "For precedence we'll toss;
Head—is it?—Tail! Of course! My loss."

The wizard boiled
those men of God,
And stirred the pot
with magic rod;
And soon, from out
the seething glue,
A peerless presence
rose to view.

'Twas seized by disembodied Drum,
Who took it home to Tweedledum,
And there that metamorphosed gent
One blissful week of rapture spent.

The while the disembodied Gee
Hung airily o'er Tweedledee;
But when the week was up, he came
To Tweedledum his turn to claim.

It chanced that
re-embodied Drum
Was taking tea
at Tweedledum.
A simple Sunday-
school affair—
And Drum, of course, was in the chair.

"Time's up," said Gee. "Evacuate!
Our common body please vacate!"
"Oh dear," said Drum, "oblige me, Gee.
Allow me time to take my tea!
"I only ask an evening's grace—
Pray put yourself into my place."
"That's what I mean to do," said Gee,
"To take your place and drink your tea."

"Oh dear! it's very hard,' said Drum,
With self-compassion overcome.
"Look here," said Gee, "you've had your week!

Get out at once! It's like your cheek!"

Said Drum, defiantly, "I won't!"

Said Gee, "I'll kill you if you don't!"

And then, with indignation rife,

He stabbed him with a carving-knife!

The clock was on the stroke of seven,

And Drum went straight away to heaven!

And disembodied Gee was left,

Of life and death at once bereft!

No matter what he likes to give,

A disembodied man can't live:

No matter how he sob and sigh,

A disembodied man can't die!

Shut out alike from

heaven and hell,

Imprisoned in a spectral

cell,

The luckless, disembodied

Gee

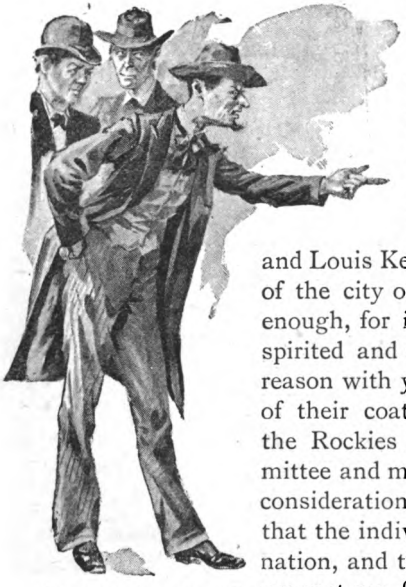
For ever haunteth

Tweedledee!

The Los Amigos Fiasco.

By A. Conan Doyle.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson.



"REASONING WITH YOU."

WHY should I, John Murphy Stonehouse, a journalist with debts and ambitions, be silent upon a subject on which the public is interested, and editors pay? It is true that I made some sort of promise to Joseph McConnor, Joshua Westmacott, and Louis Kempel, the Electrocution Committee of the city of Los Amigos. I made it readily enough, for it is wearisome to argue with high-spirited and quick-shooting citizens when they reason with you with their hands under the tails of their coats. But now that the breadth of the Rockies lies between that misguided committee and me I can very clearly see that private considerations must give way to public claims, that the individual must sacrifice himself to the nation, and that, in a word, there is nothing to prevent me from accepting the very handsome terms which have been offered me to tell the true facts about Duncan Warner and the electrocution. This was how it happened.

Of course, everyone has heard of the great electrical generating gear at Los Amigos. The town is widespread, and there are dozens of little townlets and villages all round which receive their supply from the same centre, so that the works are on a very large scale. The Los Amigos folk say that they are the largest upon earth, but then they claim that for everything in Los Amigos except the gaol and the death-rate. Those are said to be the smallest.

Now with so fine an electrical supply it seemed to be a sinful waste of hemp that the Los Amigos criminals should perish in the old-fashioned manner. And then came the news of the electro-

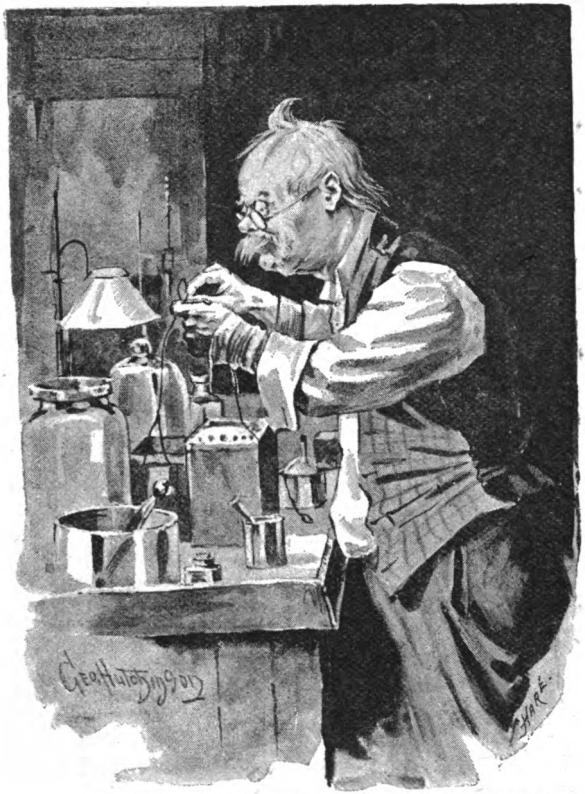
cutions in the East, and how the results had not after all been so instantaneous as had been hoped. The Western Engineers raised their eyebrows when they read of the puny shocks by which these men had perished, and they vowed in Los Amigos that when an irreclaimable came their way he should be dealt handsomely by, and have the run of all the big dynamos. There should be no reserve, said the engineers, but he should have all that they had got. And what the result of that would be none could predict, save that it must be absolutely blasting and deadly. Never before had a man been so charged with electricity as they would charge him. He was to be smitten by the essence of ten thunderbolts. Some prophesied combustion, and some disintegration and disappearance. They were waiting eagerly to settle the question by actual demonstration, and it was just at that moment that Duncan Warner came this way.

"HE WAS A POWERFUL MAN."

Warner had been wanted by the law, and by nobody else, for many years. Desperado, murderer, train robber, and road agent, he was a man beyond the pale of human pity. He had deserved a dozen deaths, and the Los Amigos folk grudged him so gaudy a one as that. He seemed to feel himself to be unworthy of it, for he made two frenzied attempts at escape. He was a powerful, muscular man with a lion head, tangled black locks, and a sweeping beard which covered his broad chest. When he was tried, there was no finer head in all the crowded court. It's no new thing to find the best face looking from the dock. But his good looks could not balance his bad deeds. His advocate did all he knew, but the cards lay against him, and Duncan Warner was handed over to the mercy of the big Los Amigos dynamos.

I was there at the committee meeting when the matter was discussed. The town council had chosen four experts to look after the arrangements. Three of them were admirable. There was Joseph McConnor, the very man who had designed the dynamos, and there was Joshua Westmacott, the chairman of the Los Amigos Electrical Supply Company, Limited. Then there was Louis Kempel, who was the engineer of the works, and lastly an

old German of the name of Peter Stulpnagel. The Germans were a strong body at Los Amigos, and they all voted for their man. That was how he got on the committee. It was said that he had been a wonderful electrician at home, and he was eternally working with wires and insulators and Leyden jars; but as he never seemed to get any further, or to have any results worth publishing, he came at last to be regarded as a harmless crank who had made science his hobby. The three practical men smiled when they heard that he had been elected as their colleague, and at the meeting they fixed it all up very nicely among themselves without much thought of the old fellow who sat with his ears scooped forward in his hands, for he was a trifle hard of hearing, taking no more part in the proceedings than we gentlemen of the press who scribbled our notes on the back benches.



"HE WAS ETERNALLY WORKING WITH WIRES AND INSULATORS AND LEYDEN JARS."

They did not take long to settle it all. In New York a strength of some two thousand volts had been used, and death had not been instantaneous. Evidently their shock had been too weak. Los Amigos should not fall into that error. The charge should be six times greater, and therefore, of course, it would be six times more effective. Nothing could possibly be more logical. The whole concentrated force of the great dynamos should be employed on Duncan Warner.

So the three settled it, and had already risen to break up the meeting, when their silent companion opened his mouth for the first time.

"Gentlemen," said he, "you appear to me to show an extraordinary ignorance upon the subject of electricity. You have not mastered the first principles of its action upon a human being."

Two of the committee were about to break into an angry reply to this brusque comment, but the chairman of the Electrical Company tapped his forehead to claim their indulgence for the crankiness of the speaker.

"Pray tell us, sir," said he, with an ironical smile, "what is there in our conclusions with which you find fault?"

"BURST OUT LAUGHING."

"With your assumption that a large dose of electricity will merely increase the effect of a small dose. Do you not think it possible that it might have an entirely different result? Do you know anything, by actual experiment, of the effect of such powerful shocks?"

"We know it by analogy," said the Chairman, pompously. "All drugs increase their effect when they increase their dose; for example—for example——"

"Whiskey," said Joseph McConnor.

"Quite so. Whiskey. You see it there."

Peter Stulpnagel smiled and shook his head.

"Your argument is not very good," said he. "When I used to take whiskey, I used to find that one glass would excite me, but that six would send me to sleep, which is just the opposite. Now, suppose that electricity were to act in just the opposite way also, what then?"

The three practical men burst out laughing. They had known that their colleague was queer, but they never had thought that he would be as queer as this.

"What then?" repeated Peter Stulpnagel.

"We'll take our chances," said the Chairman.

"Pray consider," said Peter, "that workmen, who have

touched the wires, and who have received shocks of only a few hundred volts, have died instantly. The fact is well known. And yet when a much greater force was used upon a criminal at New York, the man struggled for some little time. Do you not clearly see that the smaller dose is the more deadly?"

"I think, gentlemen, that this discussion has been carried on quite long enough," said the Chairman, rising again. "The point, I take it, has already been decided by a majority of the committee, and Duncan Warner shall be electrocuted on Tuesday by the full strength of the Los Amigos dynamos. Is it not so?"

"I PROTEST."

"I agree," said Joseph McConnor.

"I agree," said Louis Kempel.

"And I protest," said Peter Stulpnagel.

"Then the motion is carried, and your protest will be duly entered in the minutes," said the Chairman, and so the sitting was dissolved.

The attendance at the electrocution was a very small one. The four members of the committee were, of course, present with the executioner, who was to act under their orders. The others were the United States marshal, the governor of the gaol, the surgeon, the chaplain, and three members of the press, including myself. The room was a small brick chamber, forming an out-house to the Central Electrical station. It had been used as a laundry, and had an oven and copper at one side, but no other furniture save a single chair for the condemned man. A metal plate for his feet was placed in front of it, to which ran a thick insulated wire. Above another wire depended from the ceiling, which could be connected with a small metallic rod projecting from a cap which was to be placed upon his head. When this connection was established Duncan Warner's hour was come.

There was a solemn hush as the little knot of men waited for the coming of the prisoner. The three practical engineers looked a little pale, and fidgeted nervously with the wires. Even the hardened marshal was ill at ease, for a mere hanging was one thing, and this blasting of flesh and blood a very different one. As to us pressmen our faces were whiter than the sheets which lay before us. The only man who appeared to feel none of the influence of these preparations was the little German crank, who

strolled from one to the other with a smile on his lips and mischief in his eyes. More than once he even went so far as to burst into a shout of laughter, until the chaplain sternly rebuked him for his ill-timed levity.

"How can you so far forget yourself, Mr. Stulpnagel," said he, "as to jest in the presence of death?"

But the German was quite unabashed. "If I were in the presence of death I should not jest," said he, "but since I am not I may do what I choose."

This flippant reply was about to draw another and a sterner reproof from the chaplain, when the door was swung open and two warders entered leading Duncan Warner between them. He glanced round him with a set face, stepped resolutely forward, and seated himself upon the chair.

"THE CHAPLAIN STERNLY REBUKED HIM."

"Touch her off!" said he.

It was barbarous to keep him in suspense. The chaplain murmured a few words in his ear, the attendant placed the cap upon his head, and then, while we all held our breath, the wire and the metal were brought in contact.

"Great Scott!" shouted Duncan Warner.

He had bounded in his chair as the frightful shock crashed through his system. But he was not dead. On the contrary, his eyes gleamed far more brightly than they had done before. There was only one change, but it was a singular one. The black had passed from his hair and beard as the shadow passes from a landscape. They were both as white as snow. And yet there was no other sign of decay. His skin was smooth and plump and lustrous as a child's.

The marshal looked at the committee with a reproachful eye.

"There seems to be some hitch here, gentlemen," said he.

The three practical men looked at each other. Peter Stulpnagel smiled pensively.

"I think that another one should do it," said the Chairman.

Again the connection was made, and again Duncan Warner

sprang in his chair and shouted, but, indeed, were it not that he still remained in the chair none of us would have recognised him. His hair and his beard had shredded off in an instant, and the room looked like a barber's shop on a Saturday night. There he sat, his eyes still shining, his skin radiant with the glow of perfect health, but with a scalp as bald as a Dutch cheese, and a chin without so much as a trace of down. He began to revolve one of his arms, slowly and doubtfully at first, but with more confidence as he went on.

"GREAT SCOTT!"

"That jint," said he, "has puzzled half the doctors on the Pacific Slope. It's as good as new, and as limber as a hickory twig."

"You are feeling pretty well?" asked the old German.

"Never better in my life," said Duncan Warner, cheerily.

The situation was a painful one. The marshal glared at the committee. Peter Stulpnagel grinned and rubbed his hands. The three engineers scratched their heads. The bald-headed prisoner revolved his arm and looked pleased.

"I think that one more shock——" began the Chairman.

"No, sir," said the Marshal; "we've had foolery enough for one morning. We are here for an execution, and an execution we'll have."

"What do you propose?"

"There's a hook handy upon the ceiling. Fetch in a rope, and we'll soon set this matter straight."

There was another awkward delay while the warders departed for the cord. Peter Stulpnagel bent over Duncan Warner, and whispered something in his ear. The desperado started in surprise.

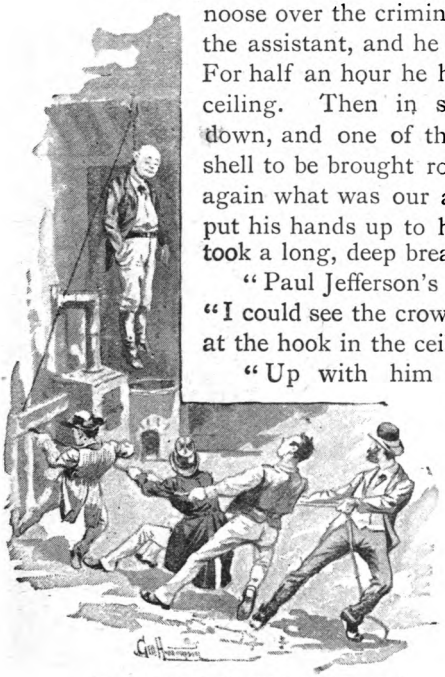
"You don't say?" he asked.

The German nodded.

"What! No ways?"

Peter shook his head, and the two began to laugh as though they shared some huge joke between them.

The rope was brought, and the marshal himself slipped the noose over the criminal's neck. Then the two warders, the assistant, and he swung their victim into the air. For half an hour he hung—a dreadful sight—from the ceiling. Then in solemn silence they lowered him down, and one of the warders went out to order the shell to be brought round. But as he touched ground again what was our amazement when Duncan Warner put his hands up to his neck, loosened the noose, and took a long, deep breath.



"SWUNG THEIR VICTIM INTO THE AIR."

"Paul Jefferson's sale is goin' well," he remarked, "I could see the crowd from up yonder," and he nodded at the hook in the ceiling.

"Up with him again!" shouted the Marshal, "we'll get the life out of him somehow." In an instant the victim was up at the hook once more.

They kept him there for an hour, but when he came down he was perfectly garrulous.

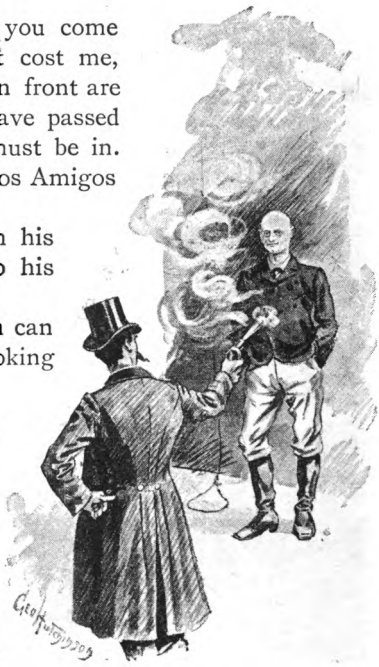
"Old man Plunket goes too much to the Arcady Saloon," said he. "Three times he's been there in an hour; and him with a family. Old man Plunket would do well to swear off."

It was monstrous and incredible, but there it was. There was no getting round it. The man was there talking when he ought to have been dead. We all sat staring in amazement, but United States Marshal Carpenter was not a man to be euchred so easily. He motioned the others to one side, so that the prisoner was left standing alone.

"Duncan Warner," said he, slowly, "you are here to play your part, and I am here to play mine. Your game is to live if you can, and my game is to carry out the sentence of the law. You've beat us on electricity. I'll give you one there. And you've beat us on hanging, for you seem to thrive on it. But it's my turn to beat you now, for my duty has to be done."

He pulled a six-shooter from his coat as he spoke, and fired all the shots through the body of the prisoner. The room was so filled with smoke that we could see nothing, but when it cleared the prisoner was still standing there, looking down in disgust at the front of his coat.

"Coats must be cheap where you come from," said he. "Thirty dollars it cost me, and look at it now. The six holes in front are bad enough, but four of the balls have passed out, and a pretty state the back must be in. By thunder, I'll make this city of Los Amigos find me a new frock coat."



"FIRED ALL THE SHOTS."

The marshal's revolver fell from his hand, and he dropped his arms to his sides, a beaten man.

"Maybe some of you gentlemen can tell me what this means," said he, looking helplessly at the committee.

Peter Stulpnagel took a step forward. "I'll tell you all about it," said he.

"You seem to be the only person who knows anything."

"I *am* the only person who knows anything. I should have warned these gentlemen; but, as they would not listen to me, I have allowed them to learn by experience. What you have done with your electricity is that you have increased this man's vitality until he can defy death for centuries."

"Centuries!"

"Yes, it will take the wear of hundreds of years to exhaust the enormous nervous energy with which you have drenched him. Electricity is life, and you have charged him with it to the utmost. Perhaps in fifty years you might execute him, but I am not sanguine about it."

"Great Scott! What shall I do with him?" cried the unhappy Marshal.

Peter Stulpnagel shrugged his shoulders.

"It seems to me that it does not much matter what you do with him now," said he.

"Maybe we could drain the electricity out of him again. Suppose we hang him up by the heels?"

"No, no, it's out of the question."

"Well, well, he shall do no more mischief in Los Amigos, anyhow," said the Marshal, with decision. "He shall go into the new gaol. The prison will wear him out."

"On the contrary," said Peter Stulpnagel, "I think that it is much more probable that he will wear out the prison."

And this was the *fiasco* which the committee took so much trouble to conceal, as if the American press were to be bribed or terrorised. That is the very truth, just as I saw it myself, and there is no use any of that committee coming eastward to interview me, for I have drawn my cheque, and my address will be Europe for the best part of the coming year.

"MAYBE YOU CAN TELL ME WHAT THIS MEANS."

People I Have Never Met.

By Scott Rankin.

WALTER BESANT

"Always when I walk about London I do so with an object, and make notes of what I have seen and heard . . . . . The girls wander about, and are like shy birds, difficult to get hold of."—Walter Besant.

Told by the Colonel.

VIII.

MY BROTHER ELIJAH.

By W. L. Alden.

Illustrations by Richard Jack.

"I NEVER told you about my brother the inventor, did I?" asked the Colonel. "Speaking of flying machines reminds me of him, for he invented seven of them, and one of the lot was a stunning success. Stunned one darkey, and came very near stunning a whole camp meeting of darkeys. My brother Lije—his name was Elijah—was what you might call a general inventor. He didn't stick to any one line, such as electricity for example, but he would invent anything from a woman's pocket to a new motive power. He invented a pocket for a woman's skirt that was warranted never to be found by the most expert pickpocket, and he put the pocket in the skirt of his wife's dress on trial. She searched for it for about a month—not all the time, you understand, but on an average three or four hours a day—and then gave it up. She said she could always find her usual old-fashioned pocket in the course of a week or ten days, and that was as much time as she could afford to waste on the subject. As for Elijah's perpetual motion machines, he invented a new one at least every year, and the loft in our barn was always full of them. Of course, they were failures, but that did not discourage Lije. You can't discourage a born inventor—that is, unless he is in the chemical line, and blows himself up with some new kind of dynamite. Lije's inventions were, to my mind, as smart as those of Edison, but the trouble with them was that for the most part they wouldn't work. However, they amused him, and did no harm to anybody.

"ELIJAH."

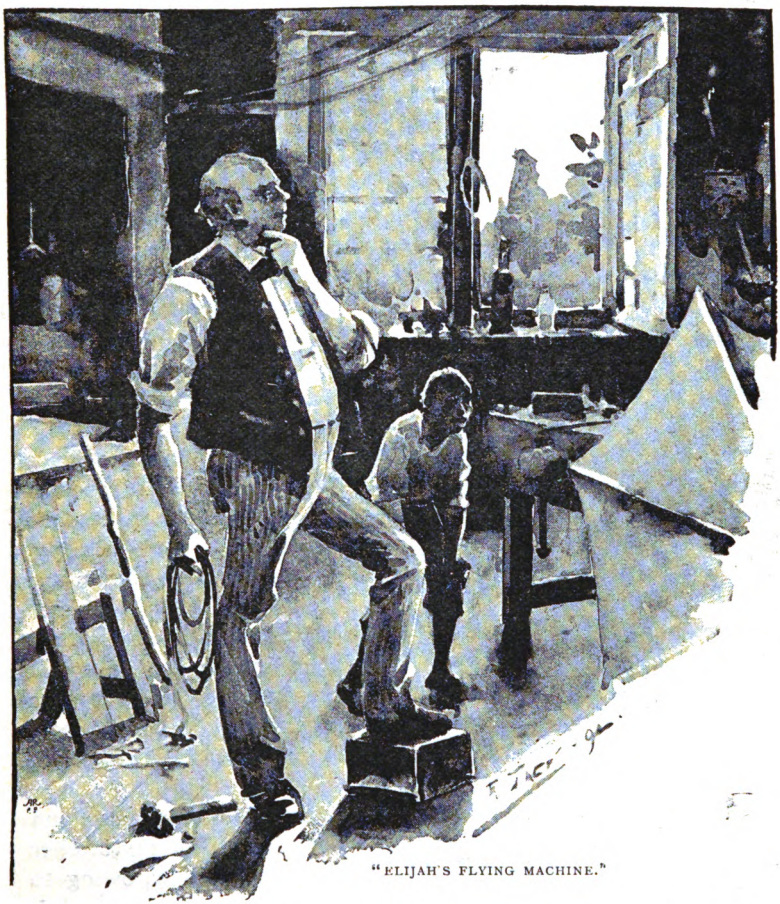
"My brother was not in the least like me in anything. He was short and stout, and the best tempered man in the State. Everybody liked him, especially the darkeys, who said that there was no more harm in him than if he was a child. I've seen him when he had just accidentally chopped off a finger, or had burnt all his hair off, and I never heard him use the smallest swear word. Of course, he never got married. A man with that sort of heavenly temper doesn't need the discipline that other folks need, and he was too much absorbed in science to have any time to associate with other people. He spent nearly all his time in his workshop, monkeying with his inventions, and his only companion was a darkey boy, about twelve years old, named Aristophanes, who waited on him, and was so fond of him that there is nothing that Lije told him to do that Aristophanes wouldn't do. If Lije had invented a new guillotine, and wanted to try it on Aristophanes's neck, the boy would have consented to have his head chopped off, and would never have doubted that Massa Lije would put it on again without even leaving a scar.

"You were speaking of this new flying machine that somebody has just invented, and that acts on the principle of a kite. 'Resistance of an inclined plane to the air' is what you called it, but that means kite, and nothing else. Why, Elijah invented that machine forty years ago, and it was one of his greatest successes, the only one, in fact, that I ever remember his making. When I say that it was successful, I don't mean to say that it was practicable. It would rise, and it would carry a man with it, but it never came into general use, for it was about impossible to get the man down again without killing him. Next to a Swiss excursion steamboat, it was the riskiest mode of locomotion evet invented.

"The way in which Lije's machine was constructed was very simple. You must have seen what we boys used to call a spider-web kite. If you haven't, I might as well tell you that it is made with three sticks that cross one another at the same point in about the middle of the kite, or rather a little above the middle, and give the kite something the shape and look of a big spider-web. Lije was fond of kite-flying, and was always trying to make improvements in kite-building, which were naturally failures, for you can be sure that the millions of boys that have been making kites ever since boys were first invented know a great sight more about kites than any scientific man knows.

"Elijah's flying machine was nothing more nor less than the

biggest spider-web kite that was ever built. The sticks were ash poles an inch in diameter, and they were covered with silk instead of paper. I forget the exact dimensions of the kite, but, according to Lije's calculations, it would sustain a hundred and fifty pounds of human being, in addition to its own weight and the

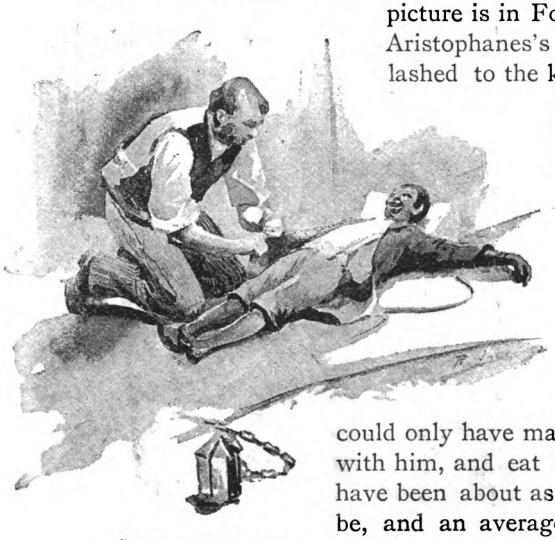


"ELIJAH'S FLYING MACHINE."

weight of its tail. The question of the exact amount of tail that the kite would require gave Lije a good deal of trouble, but he solved it like a man of science by sending up an ordinary kite and finding by experiment how much tail it needed, after which he calculated by the rule of three how much tail to give his flying

machine. In order to get the necessary weight without too great length, the tail of the flying machine was made of light iron chain, and at the end of it there was an iron hook, so that a lanthorn could be attached to it at night. As for the string that was to hold the kite, it was about the size of a ship's signal halyards, and Lije calculated that it would bear twice the amount of any strain that could possibly be put on it.

"Aristophanes was to make the trial trip, and he was perfectly willing to go, never having the least doubt that Massa Lije would secure him a safe and pleasant trip to the moon or thereabouts. Lije fastened the boy in the centre of the kite, in about the position of some celebrated Scotchman—St. Andrew, wasn't it? whose picture is in Fox's 'Book of Martyrs.' Aristophanes's arms and legs were lashed to the kite sticks, and he had a sort of rest for each foot, so as to take the strain off of the lashings. In order to make him comfortable Lije fastened a pillow under the boy's head, so that he could go to sleep in case he should feel sleepy, which he nearly always did. If Aristophanes could only have managed to take his dinner with him, and eat it in the air, he would have been about as happy as a darkey can be, and an average darkey can hold more happiness to the square inch than any white man.

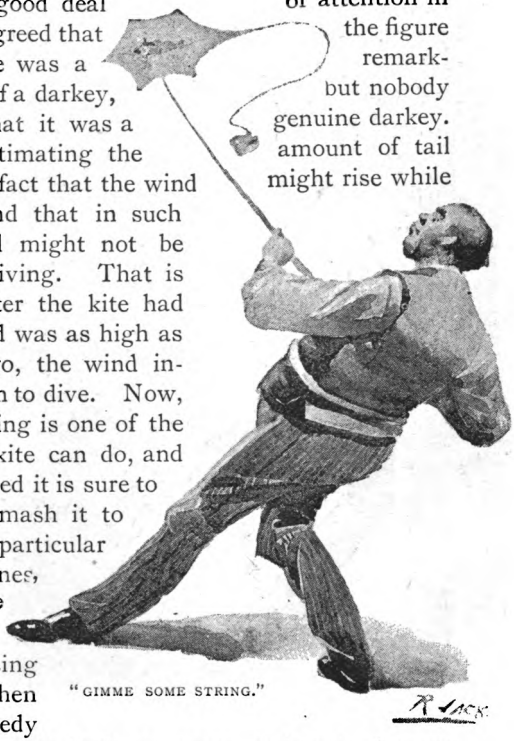


"ARISTOPHANES WAS STRAPPED TO IT."

"The trial trip was made from the back yard of our house, and nobody was present except Lije and Aristophanes, for my brother was a little shy of exhibiting his inventions in public, owing to their habit of proving failures. The kite was laid on the ground, and Aristophanes was strapped to it, and told that he must keep perfectly cool, and remember everything that he might see in the clouds. When all was ready, the kite was leaned up against the side of the barn, with the tail neatly coiled, so that it would not foul anything, and then Elijah, taking a good run with the string over his shoulder, had the satisfaction of making the kite climb up, as if it had been made by the best boy kite-builder in town.

"Holding the string was rather a tough job, for the kite pulled tremendously, and Lije was not a strong man. However, he paid out the line as fast as he could, and so managed to keep the kite steady. He was a little afraid that it would accidentally get away from him, so he tied the end of the string round his waist. There was where he made his great mistake.

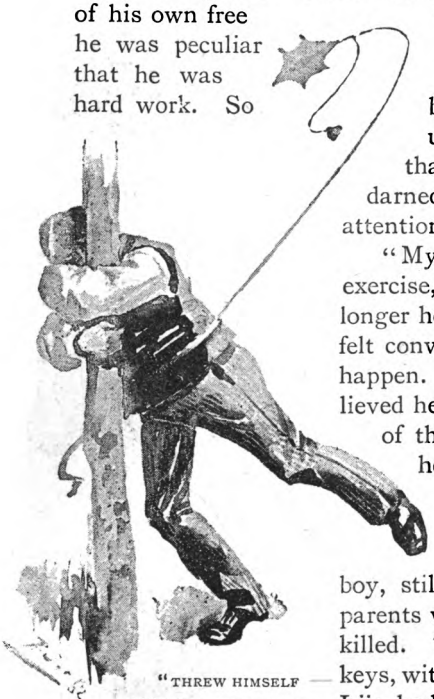
"The kite attracted a good deal of attention in the town, and everybody agreed that the figure in the middle of the kite was a remarkably good representation of a darkey, but nobody thought for a moment that it was a genuine darkey. Lije had forgotten, in estimating the amount of tail that the kite required, the fact that the wind might rise while the kite was in the air, and that in such case the amount of tail might not be enough to keep it from diving. That is just what happened. After the kite had run out all the string, and was as high as the string would let it go, the wind increased, and the kite began to dive. Now, everybody knows that diving is one of the most dangerous things a kite can do, and that unless it can be stopped it is sure to bring the kite down and smash it to pieces. Moreover, in this particular case, there was Aristophanes, who was pretty sure to be frightened by the diving of the kite—that is, supposing that he was awake. When a kite dives the only remedy is to give it string. As Lije had no more string to let out he was obliged to do the next best thing, which was to slack the string by running with it towards the kite. That stopped the diving, but only for a moment. Every time that Lije tried to stop running, and managed to hold back a little against the kite, it would begin to dive again, and about half the time it was describing circles in the air, and turning Aristophanes upside down. However, Lije knew that so long as he could keep the kite from dashing itself to the ground the darkey would come to no harm.



"GIMME SOME STRING."

"The wind kept on increasing, and the kite pulled harder than

ever. Even if Lije had not wanted to run, the kite would have dragged him. He went through the town at about eight miles an hour, yelling to everybody he met, 'Gimme some string.' But nobody understood what he said, and they all thought that it was a good joke to see a fat little man careering over the country in tow of a big kite. Of course they supposed that Lije was acting of his own free will and accord. They knew that he was peculiar in his ways, and they fancied that he was taking a little holiday after his hard work. So beyond encouraging him to keep it up, and remarking to one another that 'Lije was the most amusing darned fool in the county,' they paid no attention to his outcries.

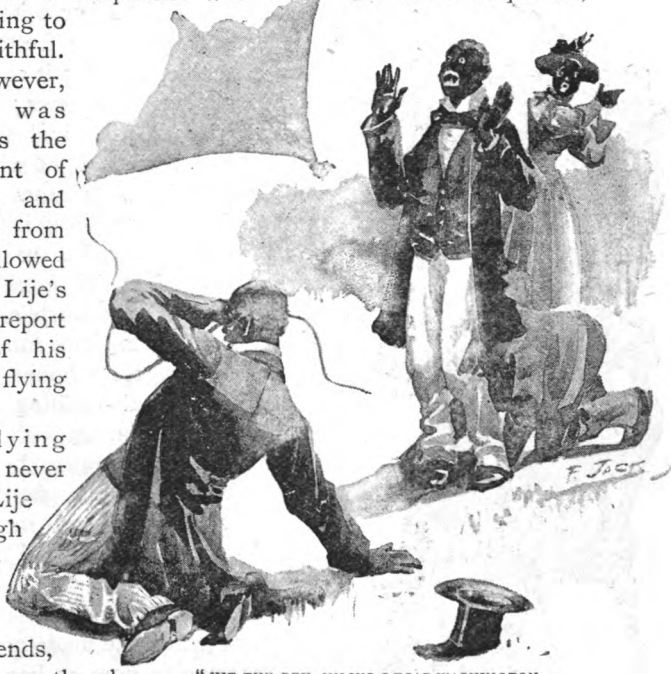


"THREW HIMSELF AGAINST A TELEGRAPH POLE."

"My brother was not used to active exercise, and had next to no wind. The longer he ran with the kite, the more he felt convinced that a tragedy was about to happen. If he kept on running, he believed he would drop dead with stoppage of the heart, and if he stopped running he knew that the kite would dash Aristophanes to pieces, and though, of course, it was not as if Aristophanes had been a white boy, still there was the chance that his parents would be disagreeable if he were killed. They were ordinary ignorant darkeys, with no sort of love for science. But Lije had grit in him, in spite of all the science that he had pumped into his head. He stuck to the kite string, and ran his level best until the moment came when he was unable to catch another breath. Then he threw himself against a telegraph pole, and clung to it with all his might. The kite couldn't drag him away from it, and so it gave one tremendous dive, and Lije felt by the sudden slackening of the string that the kite had reached the ground.

"It came down in the middle of a negro camp meeting that was in progress about a quarter of a mile away. The spot was a sandy one, and the kite, which naturally fell head downwards, buried the ends of its upper sticks in the sand, and did no injury whatever to

Aristophanes. The chain tail, however, damaged the eye of the Rev. Hannibal Blue, and then hit the Rev. Julius Cæsar Washington on the side of the head, and stunned him for half an hour. There was a good deal of excitement in the camp when Aristophanes descended. Most of the coloured people were of the opinion that he was an angel who had come down to express his satisfaction with the services, though the Rev. Mr. Blue was strongly of the opinion that Aristophanes was the devil in person, who was seeking to buffet the faithful. In time, however, Aristophanes was recognised as the private servant of Massa Lije, and was released from the kite and allowed to return to Lije's workshop to report the result of his voyage in the flying machine.



"HIT THE REV. JULIUS CÆSAR WASHINGTON ON THE SIDE OF THE HEAD."

"The flying machine was never tried again. Lije had had enough of it, and besides some of the Rev. Mr. Blue's friends, who were not exactly what you would call law-abiding citizens, sent Lije word that they rather thought that if he quit inventing things he would live longer than he otherwise might. Aristophanes didn't seem to think anything of his adventure, and said he was ready to go up again whenever Massa Lije should want to send him. But Lije told him that he intended to make a little modification in his flying machine before using it again. That was what he always said when he gave an invention up as a bad job, and accordingly nobody ever saw or heard of the flying machine again. He was a remarkable man, was my brother, and the doctor of the asylum where he spent his declining years said that he was the most interesting lunatic that he had ever met."

The American Claimant.

By MARK TWAIN.

Illustrations by Hal Hurst.

CHAPTER XXI.

"IT FILLED HIM WITH GRIM SATISFACTION."

TRACY wrote his father a letter which he believed would get better treatment than his cablegram, for it contained what ought to be welcome news; namely, that he had tried equality and working for a living; had made a fight which he could find no reason to be ashamed of, and in the matter of earning a living had proved that he was able to do it; but that on the whole he had arrived at the conclusion that he could not reform the world single-handed, and was willing to retire from the conflict with the fair degree of honor which he had gained, and was also willing to resume his position and be content with it and thankful for it. Then he approached the subject of marriage with the daughter of the American Claimant with much painstaking art. He said praiseful and appreciative things about the girl, but didn't dwell upon that detail or make it prominent. The thing which he made prominent was the opportunity now so happily afforded to reconcile York and Lancaster, and end for ever a crying injustice which had already lasted far too long.

When the old earl received that letter, the first part of it filled him with a grim and snarly satisfaction; but the rest of it brought a snort or two out of him. He wasted no ink in this emergency, either in cablegrams or letters; he promptly took ship for America to look into the matter himself.

During the first ten days following the mailing of the letter, Tracy's spirits had no idle time. He was intensely happy and intensely miserable by turns, according to Miss Sally's moods. He

never could tell when the mood was going to change, and when it changed he couldn't tell what it was that had changed it. Sometimes she was so in love with him that her love was tropical, then suddenly, and without warning or any apparent reason, the weather would change, and the victim would find himself adrift among the icebergs and feeling as lonesome and friendless as the North Pole.

Some people would have put this and that together and perceived that the weather never changed until one particular subject was introduced, and that then it *always* changed. And they would have looked further, and perceived that that subject was always introduced by the one party, never the other. They would have argued, then, that this was done for a purpose.

Late one night, when the sweethearts had been having a flawless visit together, Sally's interior devil began to work his specialty, and soon the conversation was drifting toward the customary rock. Presently, in the midst of Tracy's serene flow of talk, he felt a shudder which he knew was not his shudder, but exterior to his breast, although immediately against it. Sally was crying.

"Oh, my darling, what have I done—what have I said? It has happened again! What *have* I done to wound you?"

She disengaged herself from his arms and gave him a look of deep reproach.

"What have you done? I will tell you. You have revealed—oh, for the twentieth time—that it is not me you love, but that foolish sham, my father's imitation earldom; and you have broken my heart!"

"Oh, my child, what are you saying? I never dreamed of such a thing!"

"Oh, Howard, Howard, the things you have uttered when you were forgetting to guard your tongue have betrayed you."

"Things I have uttered when I was forgetting to guard my tongue? When have I remembered to guard it? It has no office but to speak the truth. It needs no guarding for that."

"Howard, I have noted your words and weighed them, when you were not thinking of their significance—and they have told me more than you meant they should."

"Do you mean to say you have answered the trust I had in you by using it as an ambuscade from which you could set snares? You have not done this—surely you have not done this thing."

This was an aspect of the girl's conduct which she had not clearly perceived before. Had she abused a trust? The thought crimsoned her cheeks with shame and remorse.

"Oh, forgive me," she said, "I did not know what I was doing. I have been so tortured—you *will* forgive me, you *must;* I have suffered so much, and I am so sorry, and so humble; you *do* forgive me, *don't* you?"

"SHE DISENGAGED HERSELF FROM HIS ARMS."

There was reconciliation again—immediate, perfect, all embracing. This would have been a good time to adjourn. But no,

now that the cloud-breeder was revealed at last; now that it was manifest that all the sour weather had come from this girl's dread that Tracy was lured by her rank and not herself, he resolved to lay that ghost immediately and permanently. So he said—

"Let me whisper a little secret in your ear. Your rank *couldn't* have been an enticement. I am son and heir to an English earl!"

The girl stared at him—one, two, three moments, maybe a dozen—then her lips parted—

"You?" she said, and moved away from him, still gazing at him in a kind of blank amazement.

"Why—why, certainly I am. Why do you act like this? What have I done *now?*"

"You have seemed to conceal nothing from me that I ought to know concerning yourself, and you were not privileged to keep back such a thing as this from me a moment."

"It's true, I know it! But there were circumstances in—in the way—circumstances which——"

She waved the circumstances aside.

"Well, you see," he said, pleadingly, "you seemed so bent on our travelling the proud path of honest labor and honorable poverty, that I was terrified—that is, I was afraid—of—of—well, *you* know how you talked."

"Yes, I know how I talked. And I also know that before the talk was finished you inquired how I stood as regards aristocracies, and my answer was calculated to relieve your fears."

He was silent a while. Then he said, in a discouraged way—

"I don't see any way out of it. It was a mistake. I didn't see how it might some time look. It is my way. I don't seem to see far."

The girl was almost disarmed for a moment. Then she flared up again.

"An earl's son. Do earls' sons go about working in lowly callings for their bread and butter?"

"God knows they don't! I have wished they did. But yet I am an earl's son and heir. I wish you would believe me, but you will not. I know no way to persuade you."

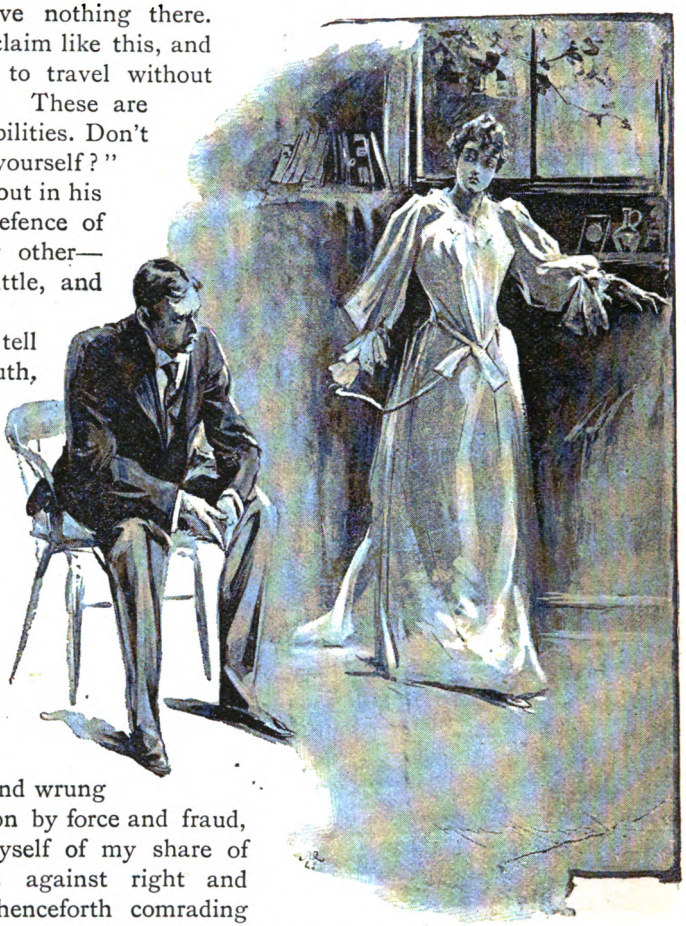
She was about to soften again, but his closing remark made her bring her foot down with smart vexation, and she cried out—

"Oh, you drive all patience out of me! Would you have one believe that you haven't your proofs at hand, and yet are what you say you are? You do not put your hand in your pocket *now*

—for you have nothing there. You make a claim like this, and then venture to travel without credentials. These are simply incredibilities. Don't you see that, yourself?"

He cast about in his mind for a defence of some kind or other—hesitated a little, and then said—

"I will tell you the truth, foolish as it will seem to you. I had an ideal—call it a dream, a folly, if you will—but I wanted to renounce the unfair advantages enjoyed by the nobility, and wrung from the nation by force and fraud, and purge myself of my share of those crimes against right and reason, by thenceforth comrading with the poor on equal terms, earning with my own hands the bread I ate, and rising by my own merit, if I rose at all."



"HE CAST ABOUT FOR A DEFENCE OF SOME KIND OR OTHER."

The young girl scanned his face narrowly while he spoke; and there was something about his simplicity of manner and statement which touched her.

"An earl's son to do that! Why, he were a man! A man to love! Oh, more, a man to worship!"

"Why, I——"

"But he never lived! He is not born. The self-abnegation that could do that—even in utter folly—could be mistaken for

greatness. Why, it would *be* greatness in this age of sordid ideals! A moment—wait—let me finish. I have one question more. Your father is earl of what?"

"Rossmore; and I am Viscount Berkeley!"

The fat was in the fire again. The girl felt so outraged that it was difficult for her to speak.

"How *can* you venture such a brazen thing! You know that he is dead, and you know that I know it!"

"'I HAVE LOST HIM.'"

"Oh, listen to me—just a word. I will prove it. I will bring you a message—a cablegram——"

"When?"

"To-morrow—next day——"

"Signed 'Rossmore'?"

"Yes — signed 'Rossmore.'"

"What will that prove?"

"What will it prove? What *should* it prove?"

"If you force me to say it—possibly the presence of a confederate somewhere."

This was a hard blow and staggered him. He said, dejectedly—

"It is true. I did not think of it. I do not know any way to do; I do everything wrong. You are going?—and you won't say even 'good-bye'?"

A pause—then she said—

"You may bring the message when it comes."

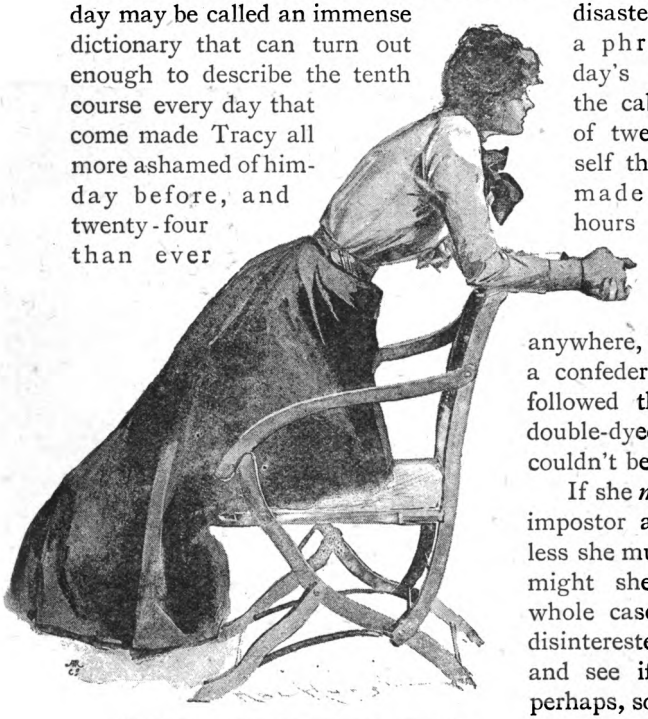
"Oh, may I? God bless you."

He was gone; and none too soon; her lips were already quivering, and now she broke down. Through her sobbings her words broke from time to time.

"Oh, he is gone. I have lost him. I shall never see him any more. And he didn't kiss me good-bye; never even offered to force a kiss from me."

CHAPTER XXII.

Next day, sure enough, the cablegram didn't come. This was an immense disaster; for Tracy couldn't go into the presence without that ticket. But if the failure of the cablegram on that first day may be called an immense disaster, where is the dictionary that can turn out a phrase sizeable enough to describe the tenth day's failure? Of course every day that the cablegram didn't come made Tracy all of twenty-four hours more ashamed of himself than he was the day before, and made Sally fully twenty-four hours more certain than ever that he not only hadn't any father anywhere, but hadn't even a confederate—and so it followed that he was a double-dyed humbug, and couldn't be otherwise.



"'CAN'T IT LOOK TO YOU THAT WAY?'"

If she *must* give up her impostor and die, doubtless she must submit; but might she not lay her whole case before some disinterested person first, and see if there wasn't, perhaps, some saving way out of the matter? She turned this idea over in her mind a good deal. She would set her case before the statesman and take his counsel. So she poured out her heart to Hawkins, and he listened with painful solicitude. She concluded pleadingly with—

"Don't tell me he is an impostor. I suppose he is, but doesn't it look to you as if he isn't? You are cool, you know, and outside; couldn't you—*can't* it look to you that way—for—for my sake?"

The poor man was troubled, but he felt obliged to keep in the neighborhood of the truth.

"No," he said, "the truth is, I know he's an impostor."

"Oh, now, you *can't* go that far. A body *can't* really *know* it. It isn't *proved* that he's not what he says he is."

Should he come out and make a clean breast of the whole wretched business? Yes—at least the most of it—it ought to be done. So he set his teeth and went at the matter with determination, but purposing to spare the girl *one* pain—that of knowing that Tracy was a criminal.

"Now I am going to tell you a plain tale—one not pleasant for me to tell or for you to hear, but we've got to stand it. I know all about that fellow; and I *know* he is no earl's son."

The girl's eyes flashed and she said—

"I don't care a snap for *that*—go on."

This was so wholly unexpected that it at once obstructed the narrative.

"She's pretty far gone." He said that to himself. "I must change my plan. Without making this fellow a criminal, I believe I will invent a name and a character for him calculated to disenchant her. If it fails to do it, then I'll know that the next rightest thing to do will be to help her to her fate, poor thing, not hinder her." Then he said aloud—

"Well, Gwendolen——"

"I want to be called Sally."

"I'm glad of it: I like it better, myself. Well, then, I'll tell you about this man Snodgrass."

"Snodgrass! Is *that* his name?"

"Yes—Snodgrass. The other's his *nom de plume*."

"It's hideous!"

The girl sampled the name musingly, once or twice—

"Snodgrass. Snodgrass. No, I could not endure that. I could not get used to it. No, I should call him by his first name. What is his first name?"

"Well, you see, his father was a physician, and he—he—well, he was an idolater of his profession, and he—well, he was a very eccentric man, and——"

"What are you shuffling about?"

"They—well, his other names are Spinal Meningitis. His father being a phy——"

"I never heard such an infamous name! Nobody can ever call a person that—a person they love. I wouldn't call an enemy by such a name. It sounds like an epithet. Was the father a lunatic?"

"No, that is not charged."

"I am glad of that, because that is transmissible. What do you think *was* the matter with him, then?"

"Well I don't really know. The family used to run a good deal to idiots, and so, maybe——"

"Oh, there isn't any *maybe* about it. This one was an idiot."

"Well, yes—he could have been. He was suspected."

"Suspected!" said Sally, with irritation. "Would one *suspect* there was going to be a dark time if he saw the constellations fall out of the sky? But that is enough about the idiot, I don't take any interest in idiots; tell me about the son."

"HE WAS NEVER SENT TO SCHOOL."

"Very well, then; this one was the oldest, but not the favorite. His brother Zylobalsamum——"

"I never heard such a name. It sounds like a disease. Is it a disease?"

"No, I don't think it's a disease. It's either Scriptural or——"

"Well, it's not Scriptural."

"Then it's anatomical. I knew it was one or the other. Yes, I remember now, it *is* anatomical. It's a gangalion, a nerve centre—it is what is called the zylobalsamum process."

"Well, go on; and if you come to any more of them, omit the names; they make one feel so uncomfortable."

"Very well, then. As I said, this one was not a favorite in the family, and so he was neglected in every way; never sent to school, always allowed to associate with the worst and coarsest characters, and so, of course, he has grown up a rude, vulgar, ignorant, dissipated ruffian, and——"

"He? It's no such thing! He is the very opposite of that! He is considerate, courteous, obliging, modest, gentle, refined, cultivated—oh, for shame! How can you say such things about him? How did you come to know so much about this family? Where did you get all this hearsay evidence?"

"Sally, it isn't hearsay evidence. That is the serious part of it. I *knew* that family—personally."

This was a surprise.

"You? You actually knew them?"

"Knew Zylo, as we used to call him, and knew his father, Dr. Snodgrass. I didn't know your own Snodgrass, but have had glimpses of him from time to time, and I heard about him all the time. He was the common talk, you see."

"Where did you know these people?"

"In Cherokee Strip."

"There are not enough people in Cherokee Strip to *give* anybody a reputation, good or bad. There isn't a quorum. Why the whole population consists of a couple of wagon loads of horse thieves."

Hawkins answered placidly—

"Our friend was one of those wagon loads."

Sally's eyes burned, and her breath came quick and fast, but she kept a fairly good grip on her anger. The statesman sat still and waited for developments. He was content with his work. It was as handsome a piece of diplomatic art as he had ever turned out, he thought; and now, he judged she would let her spectre go.

"SALLY HAD MADE UP HER MIND."

Meantime Sally had thought her case out, and made up her mind. To the major's disappointment the verdict was against him. Sally said:

"He has no friend but me, and I will not desert him now. I will not marry him if his moral character is bad; but if he can prove that it isn't, I will. To me he seems utterly good and dear: I've never seen anything about him that looks otherwise—except, of course, his calling himself an earl's son. Maybe that is only vanity, and no real harm, when you get to the bottom of it. I do *not* believe he is any such person as you have painted him. I want to see him. I want you to find him and send him to me. I will implore him to be honest with me, and tell me the whole truth, and not be afraid."

"Very well; if that is your decision I will do it. But, Sally, you know, he's poor, and——"

"Oh, *I* don't care anything about that. Will you bring him to me?"

"I'll do it. When?"

"Oh, dear, it's getting toward dark, now, and so you'll have to put it off till morning. But you *will* find him in the morning, ***won't*** you? Promise."

"I'll have him here by daylight."

(To be continued.)

Their Last Race.

By Frank Mathew.

Illustrations by F. Pegram.

I.—The Faction Fight.

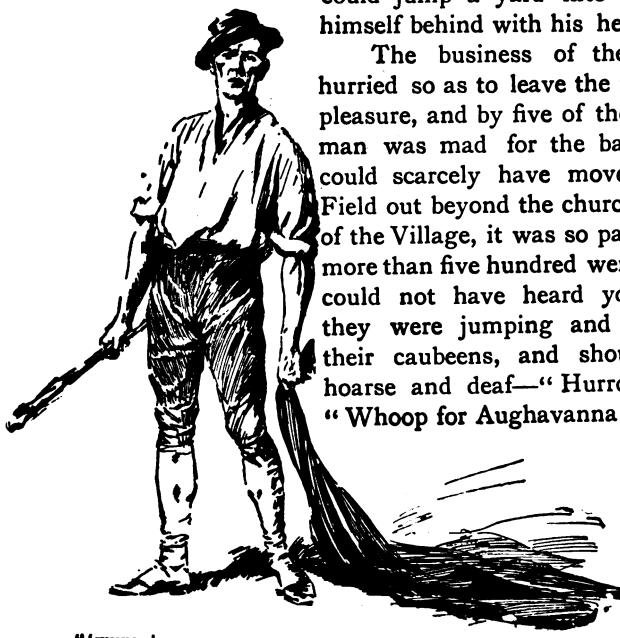
IN the heart of the Connemara Highlands, Carrala Valley hides in a triangle of mountains. Carrala Village lies in the corner of it towards Loch Ina, and Aughavanna in the corner nearest Kylemore. Aughavanna is a wreck now, if you were to look for it you would see only a cluster of walls grown over by ferns and nettles; but in those remote times, before the Great Famine, when no English was spoken in the Valley, there was no place more renowned for wild fun and fighting; and when its men were to be at a fair, every able-bodied man in the countryside took his "kippeen"—his cudgel—from its place in the chimney, and went out to do battle with a glad heart.

"COULD JUMP A YARD INTO THE AIR."

Long Mat Murnane was the king of Aughavanna. There was no grander sight than Mat smashing his way through a forest of kippeens, with his enemies staggering back to the right and left of him; there was no sweeter sound than his voice, clear as a bell, full of triumph and gladness, shouting, "Hurroo! whoop! Aughavanna for ever!" Where his kippeen flickered in the air his followers charged after, and the enemy rushed to meet him, for it was an honour to take a broken head from him.

But Carrala Fair was the black day for him. That day Carrala swarmed with men—fishers from the near coast, dwellers in lonely huts by the black lakes, or in tiny ragged villages under the shadow of the mountains, or in cabins on the hill-sides—every little town for miles, by river or sea-shore or mountain-built, was emptied. The fame of the Aughavanna men was their ruin, for they were known to fight so

well that everyone was dying to fight them. The Joyces sided against them; Black Michael Joyce had a farm in the third corner of the Valley, just where the road through the bog from Aughavanna (the road with the cross by it) meets the high-road to Leenane, so his kin mustered in force. Now Black Michael, "Meehul Dhu," was Long Mat's rival; though smaller he was near as deadly in fight, and in dancing no man could touch him, for it was said he could jump a yard into the air and kick himself behind with his heels in doing it.



"'WHERE'S THE CARRALA MAN THAT DARE TOUCH MY COAT?'"

The business of the Fair had been hurried so as to leave the more time for the pleasure, and by five of the afternoon every man was mad for the battle. Why you could scarcely have moved in Callanan's Field out beyond the churchyard at the end of the Village, it was so packed with men—more than five hundred were there, and you could not have heard yourself speak, for they were jumping and dancing, tossing their caubeens, and shouting themselves hoarse and deaf—"Hurroo for Carrala!" "Whoop for Aughavanna!" Around them a mob of women, old men and children, looked on breathlessly. It was dull weather, and the mists had crept half way down the dark mountain walls, as if to have a nearer look at the fight.

As the chapel clock struck five, Long Mat Murnane gave the signal. Down the Village he came, rejoicing in his strength, out between the two last houses, past the churchyard and into Callanan's Field; he looked every inch a king; his kippeen was ready, his frieze coat was off, with his left hand he trailed it behind him holding it by the sleeve, while with a great voice he shouted—in Irish—"Where's the Carrala man that dare touch my coat? Where's the cowardly scoundrel that dare look crooked at it?"

In a moment Black Michael Joyce was trailing his own coat behind him, and rushed forward, with a mighty cry, "Where's

the face of a trembling Aughavanna man?" In a moment their kippeens clashed; in another, hundreds of kippeens crashed together, and the grandest fight ever fought in Connemara raged over Callanan's Field. After the first roar of defiance the men had to keep their breath for the hitting, so the shout of triumph and the groan as one fell were the only sounds that broke the music of the kippeens clashing and clicking on one another, or striking home with a thud.

Never was Long Mat nobler, he rushed ravaging through the enemy, shattering their ranks and their heads, no man could withstand him; Red Callanan of Carrala went down before him; he knocked the five senses out of Dan O'Shaugran of Earrennamore, that herded many pigs by the sedgy banks of the Owen Eriff; he hollowed the left eye out of Larry Mulcahy, that lived on the Devil's Mother Mountain—never again did Larry set the two eyes of him on his high mountain-cradle; he killed Black Michael Joyce by a beautiful swooping blow on the side of the head—who would have dreamt that Black Michael had so thin a skull?

"HE KILLED BLACK MICHAEL JOYCE BY A BEAUTIFUL SWOOPING BLOW ON THE SIDE OF THE HEAD."

For near an hour Mat triumphed, then suddenly he went down under foot. At first he was missed only by those nearest him, and they took it for granted that he was up again and fighting. But when the Aughavanna men found themselves out-numbered and driven back to the Village, a great fear came on them, for they knew that all Ireland could not out-number them if Mat was to the fore. Then disaster and rout took them, and they were forced backwards up the street, struggling desperately, till hardly a man of them could stand.

"HAD DONE WITH FIGHTING."

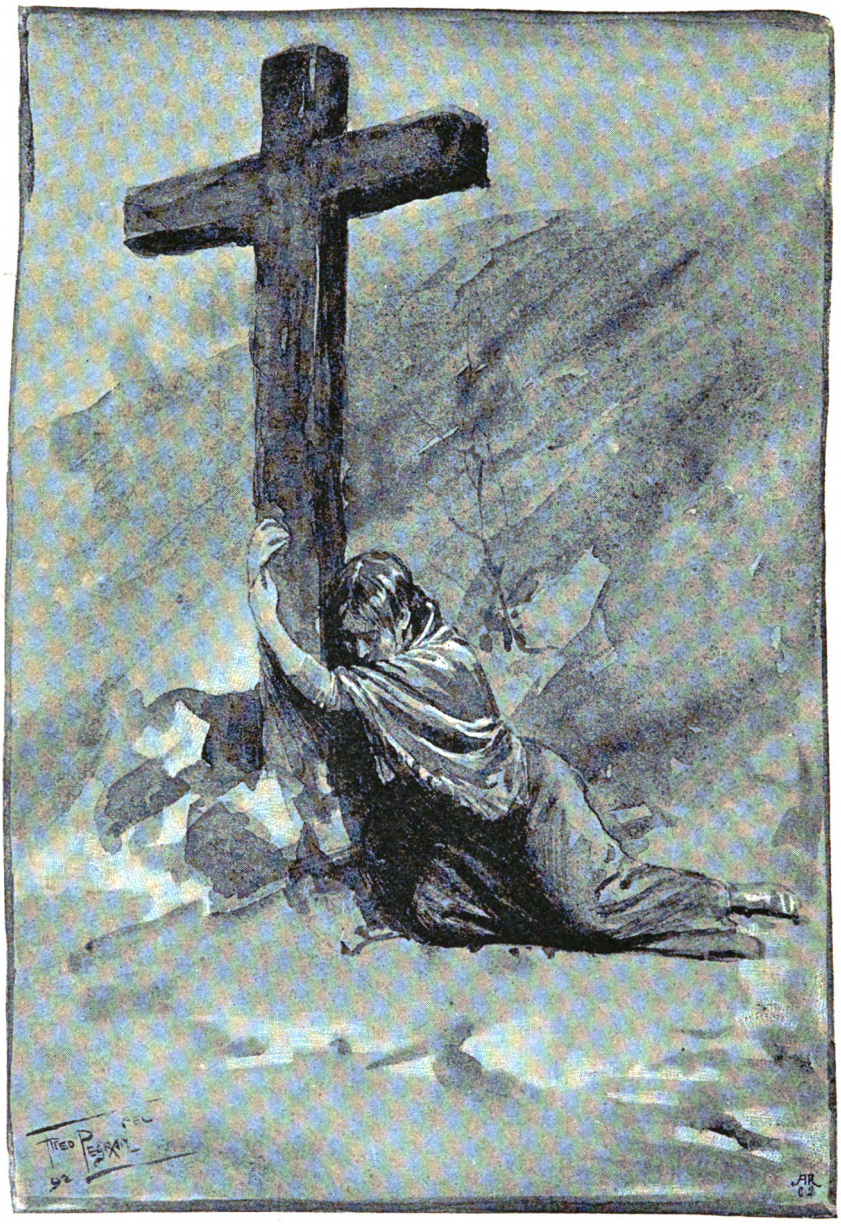
And when the victors were shouting themselves dumb, and drinking themselves blind, the beaten men looked for their leader. Long Mat was prone, his forehead was smashed, his face had been trampled into the mud—he had done with fighting. His death was untimely, yet he fell as he would have chosen—in a friendly battle. For when a man falls under the hand of an enemy (as of anyone who differs from him in creed or politics), revenge and black blood live after him; but he who takes his death from the kindly hand of a friend leaves behind him no ill-will, but only gentle regret for the mishap.

II.—By the Black Cross.

That night Carrala Village was as quiet as the dead, but in the other two corners of the Valley only the dead had quiet. For in Joyce's Farm and in Aughavanna the boys were waking Long Mat and Black Michael. Outside Murnane's cabin women knelt, raising the "keen," that cry like the sea-wind in the mountains when a storm is beginning. Indoors the dead man lay in his shroud on the table, with candles at his head and feet. Margaret Murnane, the widow, stood by him, welcoming all comers. Each who came took her by the hand, saying, "I'm sorry for your loss, ma'am"; she answered each, "I thank ye kindly." Her eyes were tearless, she was very quiet and showed no sorrow. The men wondered that she should mind so little; they sat round the table and drank the plentiful whiskey, talking at first in hushed tones of the dead man, then they grew merry talking of his merry doings, till soon Aughavanna rang with their songs and their laughing.

Then Margaret slipped out past the keening women—they looked ghastly in the yellow light from the open door—and she hurried along the road through the bog to the Leenane highroad. It was a grey moonless night; the mists had come down from the mountains and filled the Valley. She hardly knew where she was going, felt she must get to a quiet place, the noise was killing her. She could not believe it was her man they were waking; surely it was years since they brought him home dead; he had been all she had in the world, a loving and kind man to her.

At length the sound of the singing and keening died behind her, so she went more slowly. Then suddenly the wind brought an echo of singing and wailing from in front of her. She stopped with her hand on her heart; thought the Mountain Spirits were



"FLUNG HER ARMS ROUND THE ROUGH WOOD OF THE CROSS."

mocking her misery. Then she remembered that at the Farm the Joyces were waking Black Michael.

Now she knew where she was hurrying, for she saw the big black cross by the wayside. She knelt on the stones by it, tried to pray, could not remember a word, her throat and her eyes were burning, she flung her arms round the rough wood of the cross and lay at its foot.

"'IS IT YOU?'"

She never knew how long she lay there before she heard a girl coming down the road sobbing and crying aloud. The girl stopped with a cry of terror. "Holy Mother of God!" she said in a trembling voice, "what's that?" Margaret got up, leaning her right hand on the cross.

"In the Lord's Name, who are you at all at all?" cried the girl. "Is it a living woman you are?"

As she spoke her shawl fell, and Margaret knew her for Kitty Joyce, the girl that was to have married Black Michael. Kitty knew her too.

"Is it you?" she cried. "Oh! woman, woman, what right have you here? And you that are wife to a murderer!"

But Margaret Murnane stretched out open arms to her; the girl shrank back, putting out her hands to keep Margaret off. For a moment their eyes met; then the girl laid her head on the widow's heart.

III.—Their Last Race.

When the dead had been duly waked for two days and nights, the burying day came. All the morning Long Mat Murnane's coffin lay on four chairs by his cabin, with a kneeling ring of dishevelled women keening round it. Every soul in Aughavanna and their kith and kin had gathered to do him honour. And when the Angelus bell rang across the Valley from the chapel, the mourners fell into ranks, the coffin was lifted on the rough hearse, and the motley funeral—a line of carts with a mob of peasants behind, a few riding, but most of them on foot—moved slowly towards

Carrala. The women were crying bitterly, keening like an Atlantic gale; the men looked as sober as if they had never heard of a wake, and spoke sadly of the dead man, and of what a pity it was that he could not see his funeral.

"A KNEELING RING OF DISHEVELLED WOMEN KEENING ROUND IT."

The Joyces, too, had waited, as was the custom, for the Angelus bell, and now Black Michael's funeral was moving slowly towards Carrala along the other side of the bog. Before long, either party could hear the keening of the other, for you know the roads grow nearer as they converge on Carrala. Before long, either party began to fear that the other would be there first.

There is no knowing how it happened, but the funerals began to go quicker, keeping abreast; then still quicker, till the women had to break into a trot to keep up; then still quicker, till the donkeys were galloping, and till everyone raced at full speed, and the rival parties broke into a wild shout of "Aughavanna abu!" "Meehul Dhu for ever!"

For the dead men were racing—feet foremost—to the grave; they were rivals even in death. Never did the world see such a race, never was there such whooping and shouting. Where the roads meet in Callanan's Field the hearses were abreast; neck to neck they dashed across the trampled fighting-place, while the coffins jogged and jolted as if the two dead men were struggling to get out and lead the rush; neck to neck they reached the churchyard, and the hearses jammed in the gate. Behind them the carts crashed into one another, and the mourners shouted as if they were mad.

But the quick wit of the Aughavanna men triumphed, for they seized their long coffin and dragged it in, and Long Mat Murnane won his last race. The shout they gave then deafened the echo up in the mountains, so that it has never been the same since. The victors wrung one another's hands; they hugged one another.

"Himself would be proud," they cried, "if he hadn't been dead!"

By I. Zangwill.

Illustrations by Irving Montagu.

ONCE upon a time there was a Queen who unexpectedly gave birth to three Princes. They were all so exactly alike that after a moment or two it was impossible to remember which was the eldest or which was the youngest. Any two of them, sort them how you pleased, were always twins. They all cried in the same key and with the same comic grimaces. In short, there was not a hair's-breadth of difference between them—not that they had a hair's-breadth between them, for, like most babies, they were prematurely bald.

The King was very much put out. He did not mind the expense of keeping three Heir Apparents, for that fell on the country, and was defrayed by an impost called "The Queen's Tax." But it was the consecrated custom of the kingdom that the crown should pass over to the eldest son, and the absence of accurate knowledge upon this point was perplexing.

A triumvirate was out of the question; the multiplication of monarchs would be vexation to the people, and the rule of three would drive them mad.

The Queen was just as annoyed, though on different grounds. She felt it hard enough to be the one mother in the realm who could not get the Queen's bounty, without having to suffer the King's reproaches. Her heart was broken, and she died soon after of laryngitis.

To distinguish the triplets (when it was too late) they were always dressed one in green, one in blue, and one in black, the colours of the national standard, and naturally got to be popularly known by the sobriquets of the Green Prince, the Blue Prince, and the Black Prince. Every year they got older and older till at last they became young men. And every year the King got older and older till at last he became an old man, and the fear crept into his heart that he might be restored to his wife and leave the kingdom embroiled in civil feud unless he settled straightway who should be the heir. But, being human, notwithstanding his court laureates, he put off the disagreeable duty from day to day, and might have died without an heir, if the envoys from Paphlagonia had not aroused him to the necessity of a decision. For they announced that the Princess of Paphlagonia, being suddenly orphaned, would be sent to him in the twelfth moon that she might marry his eldest son as covenanted by ancient treaty. This was the last straw. "But I don't know who is my eldest son!" yelled the King, who had a vast respect for covenants and the Constitution.

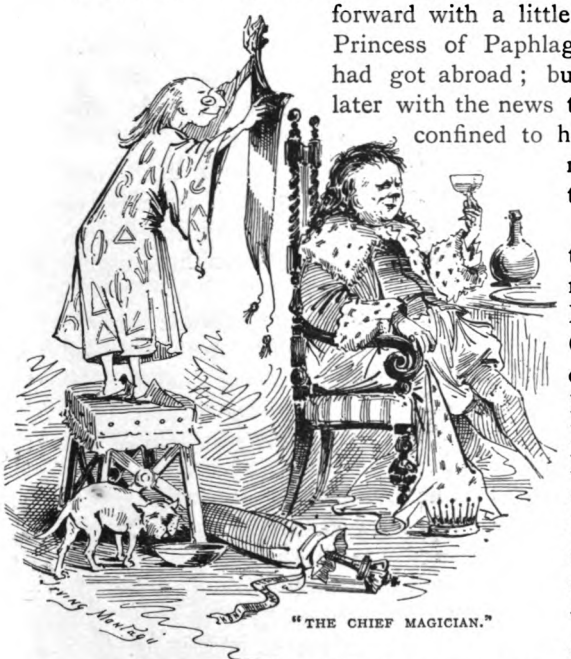
"'THE ELDEST IS HE WHO SHALL THE PRINCESS WED.'"

In great perturbation he repaired to a famous Oracle, at that time worked by a priestess with her hair let down her back. The King asked her a plain question: "Which is my eldest son?"

After foaming at the mouth like an open champagne bottle, she replied:

"The eldest is he who shall the Princess wed."

The King said he knew that already, and was curtly told that if the replies did not give satisfaction he could go elsewhere. So he went to the wise men and the magicians, and held a levée of them, and they gave him such goodly counsel that the Chief Magician was henceforth honoured with the privilege of holding the Green, Black, and Blue Tricolour over the King's head at mealtimes. Soon after, it being the twelfth moon, the King set forward with a little retinue to meet the Princess of Paphlagonia, whose coming had got abroad; but returned two days later with the news that the Princess was confined to her room, and would not arrive in the city till next year.

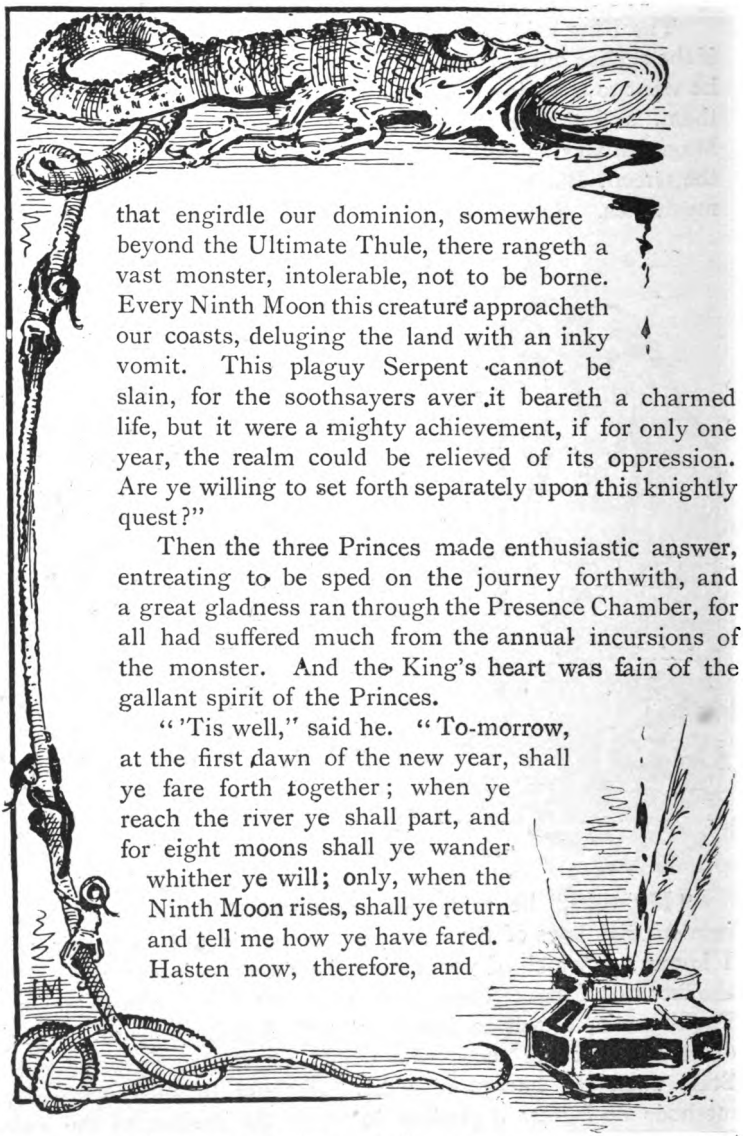


"THE CHIEF MAGICIAN."

On the last day of the year the King summoned the three Princes to the Presence Chamber. And they came, the Green Prince, and the Blue Prince, and the Black Prince, and made obeisance to the Monarch, who sat in moiré antique robes, on the old gold throne, with his courtiers all around him.

"My sons," he said, "ye are aware that, according to the immemorial laws of the realm, one of you is to be my heir, only I know not which of you he is; the difficulty is complicated by the fact that I have covenanted to espouse him to the Princess of Paphlagonia, of whose imminent arrival ye have heard. In this dilemma there are those who would set the sovereignty of the State upon the hazard of a die. But not by such undignified methods do I deem it prudent to extort the designs of the gods. There are ways alike more honourable to you and to me of ascertaining the intentions of the fates. And first, the wise men and

the magicians recommend that ye be all three sent forth upon an arduous emprise. As all men know, somewhere in the great seas



that engirdle our dominion, somewhere beyond the Ultimate Thule, there rangeth a vast monster, intolerable, not to be borne. Every Ninth Moon this creature approacheth our coasts, deluging the land with an inky vomit. This plaguy Serpent cannot be slain, for the soothsayers aver it beareth a charmed life, but it were a mighty achievement, if for only one year, the realm could be relieved of its oppression. Are ye willing to set forth separately upon this knightly quest?"

Then the three Princes made enthusiastic answer, entreating to be sped on the journey forthwith, and a great gladness ran through the Presence Chamber, for all had suffered much from the annual incursions of the monster. And the King's heart was fain of the gallant spirit of the Princes.

"'Tis well," said he. "To-morrow, at the first dawn of the new year, shall ye fare forth together; when ye reach the river ye shall part, and for eight moons shall ye wander whither ye will; only, when the Ninth Moon rises, shall ye return and tell me how ye have fared. Hasten now, therefore, and

equip yourselves as ye desire, and if there be aught that will help you in the task, ye have but to ask for it."

Then, answering quickly before his brothers could speak, the Black Prince cried: "Sire, I would crave the magic boat which saileth under the sea and destroyeth mighty armaments."

"It is thine," replied the King.

Then the Green Prince said: "Sire, grant me the magic car which saileth through the air over the great seas."

The Black Prince started and frowned, but the King answered, "It is granted." Then, turning to the Blue Prince, who seemed lost in meditation, the King said: "Why art thou silent, my son? Is there nothing I can give thee?"

"Thanks, I will take a little pigeon," answered the Blue Prince abstractedly.

The courtiers stared and giggled, and the Black Prince chuckled, but the Blue Prince was seemingly too proud to back out of his request.

So at sunrise on the morrow the three Princes set forth, journeying together till they came to the river where they had agreed to part company. Here the magic boat was floating at anchor, while the magic car was tied to the trunk of a plane-tree upon the bank, and the little pigeon, fastened by a thread, was fluttering among the branches.

"'THERE RANGETH A VAST MONSTER.'"

Now, when the Green Prince saw the puny pigeon, he was like to die of laughing.

"Dost thou think to feed the Serpent with thy pigeon?" he sneered. "I fear me thou wilt not choke him off thus."

"And what hast thou to laugh at?" retorted the Black Prince, interposing. "Dost thou think to find the Serpent of the Sea in the air?"

"He is always in the air," murmured the Blue Prince, inaudibly.

"Nay," said the Green Prince, scratching his head dubiously. "But thou didst so hastily annex the magic boat, I had to take the next best thing."

"Dost thou accuse me of unfairness?" cried the Black Prince in a pained voice. "Sooner than thou shouldst say that, I would change with thee."

"Wouldst thou, indeed?" enquired the Green Prince eagerly.

"Ay, that would I," said the Black Prince indignantly. "Take the magic boat, and may the gods speed thee." So saying he jumped briskly into the magic car, cut the rope, and sailed aloft. Then, looking down contemptuously upon the Blue Prince, he shouted: "Come, mount thy pigeon, and be off in search of the monster."

But the Blue Prince replied, "I will await you here.'

Then the Green Prince pushed off his boat, chuckling louder than ever. "Dost thou expect to keep the creature off our coasts by guarding the head of the river?" he scoffed.

But the Blue Prince replied, "I will await you both here till the Ninth Moon."

No sooner were his brothers gone than the Blue Prince set about building a hut. Here he lived happily, fishing his meals out of the river or snaring them out of the sky. The pigeon was never for a moment in danger of being eaten. It was employed more agreeably to itself and its master in operations which will appear anon. Most of the time the Blue Prince lay on his back among the wild flowers, watching the river rippling to the sea or counting the passing of the eight moons, that alternately swelled and dwindled, now showing like the orb of the Black Prince's car, now like the Green Prince's boat. Sometimes he read scraps of papyrus, and his face shone.

One lovely starry night, as the Blue Prince was watching the heavens, it seemed to him as if the eighth moon in dying had dropped out of the firmament and was falling upon him. But it was only the Black Prince come back. His garments were powdered with snow, his brows were knitted gloomily, he had a dejected, despondent aspect.

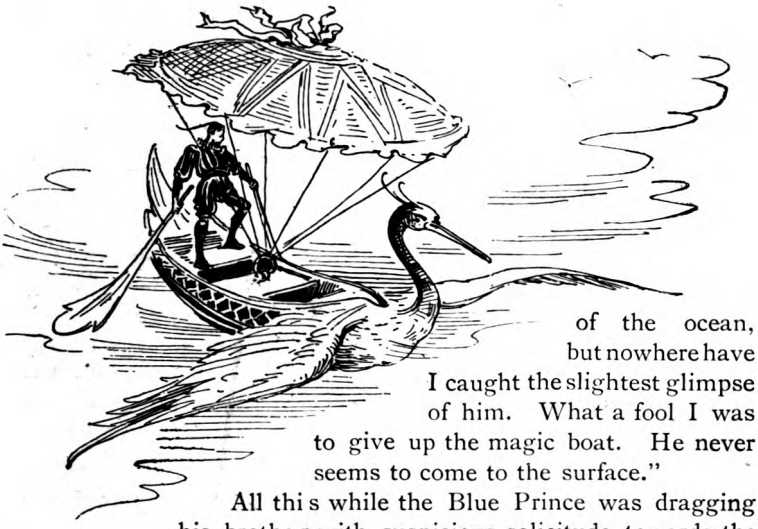
"Thou here!" he snapped.

"Of course," said the Blue Prince, cheerfully, though he seemed a little embarrassed all the same. "Haven't I been here all the time? But go into my hut, I've kept supper hot for thee."

"Has the Green Prince had his?"

"No, I haven't seen anything of him. Hast thou scotched the Serpent?"

"No, I haven't seen anything of him," growled the Black Prince. "I've passed backwards and forwards over the entire face

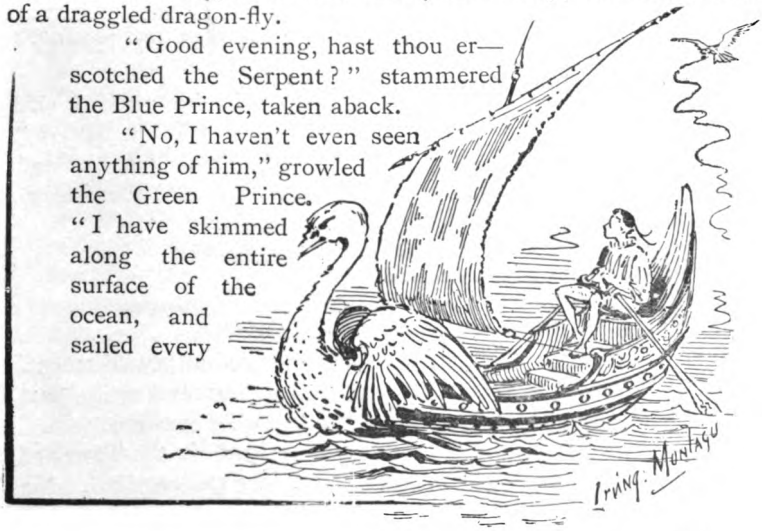


of the ocean, but nowhere have I caught the slightest glimpse of him. What a fool I was to give up the magic boat. He never seems to come to the surface."

All this while the Blue Prince was dragging his brother with suspicious solicitude towards the hut, where he sat him down to his own supper of ortolans and oysters. But the host had no sooner run outside again, on the pretext of seeing if the Green Prince was coming, than there was a disturbance and eddying in the stream as of a rally of water-rats, and the magic boat shot up like a catapult, and the Green Prince stepped on deck all dry and dusty, and with the air of a draggled dragon-fly.

"Good evening, hast thou er—scotched the Serpent?" stammered the Blue Prince, taken aback.

"No, I haven't even seen anything of him," growled the Green Prince. "I have skimmed along the entire surface of the ocean, and sailed every



inch beneath it, but nowhere have I caught the slightest glimpse of him. What a fool I was to give up the magic car. From a height I could have commanded an ampler area of ocean. Perhaps he was up the river."

"No, I haven't seen anything of him," replied the Blue Prince, hastily. "But go into my hut, thy supper must be getting quite cold." He hurried his verdant brother into the hut, and gave him some chestnuts out of the oven (it was the best he could do for him), and then rushed outside again, on the plea of seeing if the Serpent was coming. But he seemed to expect him to come from the sky, for, leaning against the trunk of the plane-tree by the river, he resumed his anxious scrutiny of the constellations. Presently there was a gentle whirring in the air, and a white bird became visible, flying rapidly downwards in his direction. Almost at the same instant he felt himself pinioned by a rope to the tree-trunk, and saw the legs of the alighting pigeon neatly prisoned in the Black Prince's fist.

"THE DAMSEL OF THE TOWER."

"Aha!" croaked the Black Prince triumphantly. "Now we shall see through thy little schemes."

He detached the slip of papyrus which dangled from the pigeon's neck.

"How darest thou read my letters?" gasped the Blue Prince.

"If I dare to rob the mail, I shal certainly not hesitate to read the letters," answered the Black Prince coolly, and went on to enunciate slowly (for the light was bad) the following lines:

"Heart-sick I watch the old moon's ling'ring death,
And long upon my face to feel thy breath;
I burn to see its final flicker die,
And greet our moon of honey in the sky."

"What is all this moonshine?" he concluded in bewilderment.

Now the Blue Prince was the soul of candour, and seeing that nothing could now be lost by telling the truth, he answered:

"This is a letter from a damsel who resideth in the Tower of Telifonia, on the outskirts of the capital; we are engaged. No doubt the language seemeth to thee a little overdone, but wait till thy turn cometh."

"And so thou hast employed this pigeon as a carrier between thee and this suburban young person?" cried the Black Prince, feeling vaguely boiling over with rage.

"Even so," answered his brother, "but guard thy tongue. The lady of whom thou speakest so disrespectfully is none other than the Princess of Paphlagonia."

"Eh? What?" gasped the Black Prince.

"She hath resided there since the twelfth moon of last year. The King received her the first time he set out to meet her."

"Dost thou dare say the King hath spoken untruth?"

"Nay, nay. The King is a wise man. Wise men never mean what they say. The King said she was confined to her room. It is true, for he had confined her in the Tower with her maidens for fear she should fall in love with the wrong Prince, or the reverse, before the rightful heir was discovered. The King said she would not arrive in the city till next year. This also is true. As thou didst rightly observe, the Tower of Telifonia is situated in the suburbs. The King did not bargain for my discovering that a beautiful woman lived in its topmost turret."

"Nay, how couldst thou discover that? The King did not lend thee the magic car, and thou certainly couldst not see her at that height without the magic glass!"

"I have not seen her. But through the embrasure I often saw the sunlight flashing and leaping like a thing of life, and I knew it was what the children call a 'Johnny Noddy.' Now a 'Johnny Noddy' argueth a mirror, and a mirror argueth a woman, and frequent use thereof argueth a beautiful woman. So, when in the Presence Chamber the King told us of his dilemma as to the hand of the Princess of Paphlagonia, it instantly dawned upon me who the beautiful woman was, and why the King was keeping her hidden away, and why he had hidden away his meaning also. Wherefore straightway I asked for a pigeon, knowing that the pigeons of the town roost on the Tower of Telifonia, so that I had but to fly my bird at the end of a long string like a kite to establish communication between me and the fair captive. In time my little messenger grew so used to the journey to and fro that I could dispense with the string. Our courtship has been most satisfactory. We love each other ardently, and——"

"But you have never seen each other!" interrupted the Black Prince.

"Thou forgettest we are both royal personages," said the Blue Prince in astonished reproof.

"But this is gross treachery—what right hadst thou to make these underhand advances in our absence?"

"Thou forgettest I had to scotch the Serpent," said the Blue Prince in astonished reproof. "Thou forgettest also that she can only marry the heir to the throne."

"Ah, true!" said the Black Prince, considerably relieved. "And as thou hast chosen to fritter away the time in making love to her, thou hast taken the best way to lose her."

"Thou forgettest I shall have to marry her," said the Blue Prince in astonished reproof. "Not only because I have given my word to a lady, but because I have promised the King to do my best to scotch the Serpent of the Sea. Really thou seemest terribly dull to-day. Let me put the matter in a nutshell. If he who scotches the Sea Serpent is to marry the Princess, then would I scotch the Sea Serpent by marrying the Princess, and marry the Princess to scotch the Sea Serpent. Thou hast searched the face of the sea, and our brother has dragged its depths, and nowhere have ye seen the Sea Serpent. Yet in the Ninth Moon he will surely come, and the land will be covered with an inky vomit as in former years. But if I marry the Princess of Paphlagonia in the Ninth Moon, the Royal Wedding will ward off the Sea Serpent, and not a scribe will shed ink to tell of his advent. Therefore, instead of ranging through the earth, I stayed at home and paid my addresses to the——"

"A JEWELLED SCIMITAR SHIMMERED IN THE STARLIGHT."

"Yes, yes, what a fool I was!" interrupted the Black Prince, smiting his brow with his palm, so that the pigeon escaped from between his fingers, and winged its way back to the Tower of Telifonia as if to carry his words to the Princess.

"Thou forgettest thou art a fool still," said the Blue Prince in astonished reproof. "Prithee, unbind me forthwith."

"Nay, I am a fool no longer, for it is I that shall wed the Princess of Paphlagonia and scotch the Sea Serpent, it is I that

have sent the pigeon to and fro, and unless thou makest me thine oath to be silent on the matter I will slay thee and cast thy body into the river."

"Thou forgettest our brother, the Green Prince," said the Blue Prince in astonished reproof.

"Bah! he hath eyes for naught but the odd ortolans and oysters I sacrificed that he might gorge himself withal, while I spied out thy secret. He shall be told that I returned to exchange my car for thy pigeon even as I exchanged my boat for his car. Come, thine oath or thou diest." And a jewelled scimitar shimmered in the starlight.

The Blue Prince reflected that though life without love was hardly worth living, death was quite useless. So he swore and went in to supper. When he found that the Green Prince had not spared even a baked chestnut before he fell asleep, he swore again. And on the morrow when the Princes approached the Tower of Telifonia, with its flashing "Johnny Noddy," they met a courier from the King, who, having informed himself of the Black Prince's success, ran ahead with the rumour thereof. And lo! when the Princes passed through the city gate they found the whole population abroad clad in all their bravery, and flags flying and bells ringing and roses showering from the balconies, and merry music swelling in all the streets for joy of the prospect of the Sea Serpent's absence. And when the new moon rose, the three Princes, escorted by flute-players, hied them to the Presence Chamber, and the King embraced his sons, and the Black Prince stood forward and explained that if a Prince were married in the Ninth Moon it would prevent the monster's annual visit. Then

"'THE GODS HAVE ENABLED ME TO DISCOVER MY YOUNGEST SON.'"

the King fell upon the Black Prince's neck and wept and said, "My son! my son! my pet! my baby! my tootsicums! my popsy-wopsy!"

And then, recovering himself, and addressing the courtiers, he said: "The gods have enabled me to discover my youngest son. If they will only now continue as propitious, so that I may discover the elder of the other two, I shall die not all unhappy."

But the Black Prince could repress his astonishment no longer. "Am I dreaming, Sire?" he cried. "Surely I have proved myself the eldest, not the youngest!"

"Thou forgettest that thou hast come off successful," replied the King in astonished reproof. "Or art thou so ignorant of history or of the sacred narratives handed down to us by our ancestors that thou art unaware that when three brothers set out on the same quest, it is always the youngest brother that emerges triumphant? Such is the will of the gods. Cease, therefore, thy blasphemous talk, lest they overhear thee and be put out."

A low, ominous murmur from the courtiers emphasised the King's warning.

"But the Princess—she at least is mine," protested the unhappy Prince. "We love each other—we are engaged."

"Thou forgettest she can only marry the heir," replied the King in astonished reproof. "Wouldst thou have us repudiate our solemn treaty?"

"But I wasn't really the first to hit on the idea at all!" cried the Black Prince desperately. "Ask the Blue Prince! he never telleth untruth."

"Thou forgettest I have taken an oath of silence on the matter," replied the Blue Prince in astonished reproof. "The Black Prince it was that first hit on the idea," volunteered the Green Prince. "He exchanged his boat for the car and the car for the pigeon."

So the three Princes were dismissed, while the King took counsel with the magicians and the wise men who never mean what they say. And the Court Chamberlain, wearing the orchid of office in his button-hole, was sent to interview the Princess, and returned saying that she refused to marry any one but the proprietor of the pigeon, and that she still had his letters as evidence in case of his marrying any one else.

"Bah!" said the King, "she shall obey the treaty. Six feet of parchment are not to be put aside for the whim of a girl five foot eight. The only real difficulty remaining is to decide whether

the Blue Prince or the Green Prince is the elder. Let me see—what was it the Oracle said? Perhaps it will be clearer now:

'The eldest is he that shall the Princess wed.'

No, it still seems merely to avoid stating anything new."

"Pardon me, Sire," replied the Chief Magician; "it seems perfectly plain now. Obviously, thou art to let the Princess choose her husband, and the Oracle guarantees that, other things being equal, she shall select the eldest. If thou hadst let her have the pick from among the three, she would have selected the one with whom she was in love—the Black Prince to wit, and that would have interfered with the Oracle's arrangements. But now that we know with whom she is in love, we can remove that one, and then, there being no reason why she should choose the Green Prince rather than the Blue Prince, the deities of the realm undertake to inspire her to go by age only."

"Thou hast spoken well," said the King. "Let the Princess of Paphlagonia be brought, and let the two Princes return."

So after a space the beautiful Princess, preceded by trumpeters, was conducted to the Palace, blinking her eyes at the unaccustomed splendour of the lights. And the King and all the courtiers

blinked their eyes, dazzled by her loveliness. She was clad in white samite, and on her shoulder was perched a pet pigeon. The King sat in his moiré antique robes on the old gold throne, and the Blue Prince stood on his right hand, and the Green Prince on his left, the Black Prince as the youngest having been sent to bed early. The Princess courtesied three times, the third time so low that the pigeon was flustered, and flew off her shoulder, and, after circling about, alighted on the head of the Blue Prince.

"It is the Crown," said the Chief Magician, in an awe-struck voice. Then the Princess's eyes looked around in search of the pigeon, and when they lighted on the Prince's head they kindled as the grey sea kindles at sunrise

An answering radiance shone in the Blue Prince's eyes, as, taking the pigeon that nestled in his hair, he let it fly towards the Princess. But the Princess, her bosom heaving as if another pigeon fluttered beneath the white samite, caught it and set it free again, and again it made for the Blue Prince.

Three times the bird sped to and fro. Then the Princess raised her humid eyes heavenward, and from her sweet lips rippled like music the verse:

"Last night I watched its final flicker die."

And the Blue Prince answered:

"*Now* greet our moon of honey in the sky."

Half fainting with rapture the Princess fell into his arms, and from all sides of the great hall arose the cries, "The Heir! The Heir! Long live our future King! The eldest-born! The Oracle's fulfilled!"

Such was the origin of lawn tennis, which began with people tossing pigeons to each other in imitation of the Prince and Princess in the Palace Hall. And this is why love plays so great a part in the game, and that is how the match was arranged between the Blue Prince and the Princess of Paphlagonia.

The Type-written Letter.

By Robert Barr.

Illustrations by Miss Hammond.

WHEN a man has battled with poverty all his life, fearing it as he fought it, feeling for its skinny throat to throttle it, and yet dreading all the while the coming of the time when it would gain the mastery and throttle him—when such a man is told that he is rich, it might be imagined he would receive the announcement with hilarity. When Richard Denham realised that he was wealthy he became even more sobered than usual, and drew a long breath as if he had been running a race and had won it. The man who brought him the news had no idea he had told Denham anything novel. He merely happened to say, "You are a rich man, Mr. Denham, and will never miss it."

"MISS GALE."

Denham had never before been called a rich man, and up to that moment he had not thought of himself as wealthy. He wrote out the cheque asked of him, and his visitor departed gratefully, leaving the merchant with something to ponder over. He was as surprised with the suddenness of the thing as if someone had left him a legacy. Yet the money was all of his own accumulating, but his struggle had been so long, and he had been so hopeless about it, that from mere habit he exerted all his energies long after the enemy was overcome—just as the troops at New Orleans fought a fierce battle not knowing the war was over. He had sprung from such a hopelessly poor family. Poverty had been their inheritance from generation to generation. It was the invariable legacy that father had left to son in the Denham family. All had accepted their lot with uncomplaining resignation, until Richard resolved he would at least have

a fight for it. And now the fight had been won. Denham sat in his office staring at the dingy wall-paper so long, that Rogers, the chief clerk, put his head in and said in a deferential voice:

"Anything more to-night, Mr. Denham?"

Denham started as if that question in that tone had not been asked him every night for years.

"What's that, what's that?" he cried.

Rogers was astonished, but too well trained to show it.

"Anything more to-night, Mr. Denham?"

"Ah, quite so. No, Rogers, thank you, nothing more."

"Good-night, Mr. Denham."

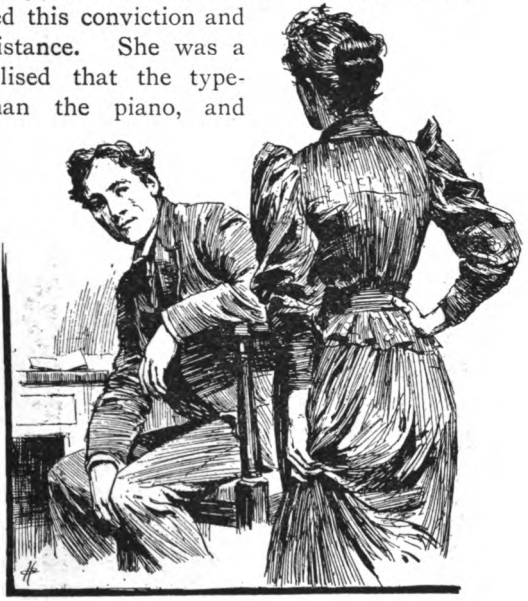
"Eh? Oh, yes. Good night, Rogers, good night."

When Mr. Denham left his office and went out into the street everything had an unusual appearance to him. He walked long, unheeding the direction. He looked at the fine residences and realised that he might have a fine residence if he wanted it. He saw handsome carriages; he too might set up an equipage. The satisfaction these thoughts produced was brief. Of what use would a fine house or an elegant carriage be to him? He knew no one to invite to the house or to ride with him in the carriage. He began to realise how utterly alone in the world he was. He had no friends, no acquaintances even. The running dog, with its nose to the ground, sees nothing of the surrounding scenery. He knew men in a business way, of course, and doubtless each of them had a home in the suburbs somewhere, but he could not take a business man by the shoulders and say to him, "Invite me to your house; I am lonely; I want to know people."

If he got such an invitation, he would not know what to do with himself. He was familiar with the counting-room and its language, but the drawing-room was an unexplored country to him, where an unknown tongue was spoken. On the road to wealth he had missed something, and it was now too late to go back for it. Only the day before, he had heard one of the clerks, who did not know he was within earshot, allude to him as "the old man." He felt as young as ever he did, but the phrase, so lightly spoken, made him catch his breath.

As he was now walking through the park, and away from the busy streets, he took off his hat and ran his fingers through his grizzled hair, looking at his hand when he had done so as if the grey, like wet paint, had come off. He thought of a girl he knew once, who perhaps would have married him if he had asked her, as he was tempted to do. But that had

always been the mistake of the Denhams. They had all married young except himself, and so sunk deeper into the mire of poverty, pressed down by a rapidly-increasing progeny. The girl had married a baker, he remembered. Yes, that was a long time ago. The clerk was not far wrong when he called him an old man. Suddenly, another girl arose before his mental vision—a modern girl—very different indeed to the one who married the baker. She was the only woman in the world with whom he was on speaking terms, and he knew her merely because her light and nimble fingers played the business sonata of one note on his office typewriter. Miss Gale was pretty, of course—all typewriter girls are—and it was generally understood in the office that she belonged to a good family who had come down in the world. Her somewhat independent air deepened this conviction and kept the clerks at a distance. She was a sensible girl who realised that the typewriter paid better than the piano, and accordingly turned the expertness of her white fingers to the former instrument. Richard Denham sat down upon a park bench. "Why not?" he asked himself. There was no reason against it except that he felt he had not the courage. Nevertheless, he formed a desperate resolution.



"DENHAM HESITATED."

Next day, business went on as usual. Letters were answered, and the time arrived when Miss Gale came in to see if he had any further commands that day. Denham hesitated. He felt vaguely that a business office was not the proper place for a proposal; yet he knew he would be at a disadvantage anywhere else. In the first place, he had no plausible excuse for calling upon the young woman at home, and, in the second place, he knew if he once got there he would be stricken dumb. It must either be at his office or nowhere.

"Sit down a moment, Miss Gale," he said at last; "I wanted to consult you about a matter—about a business matter."

Miss Gale seated herself, and automatically placed on her knee the shorthand writing-pad ready to take down his instructions. She looked up at him expectantly. Denham, in an embarrassed manner, ran his fingers through his hair.

"I am thinking," he began, "of taking a partner. The business is very prosperous now. In fact, it has been so for some time."

"Yes?" said Miss Gale interrogatively.

"Yes. I think I should have a partner. It is about that I wanted to speak to you."

"DENHAM MOPPED HIS BROW."

"Don't you think it would be better to consult with Mr. Rogers? He knows more about business than I. But perhaps it is Mr. Rogers who is to be the partner?"

"No, it is not Rogers. Rogers is a good man. But—it is not Rogers."

"Then I think in an important matter like this Mr. Rogers, or someone who knows the business as thoroughly as he does, would be able to give you advice that would be of some value."

"I don't want advice exactly. I have made up my mind to have a partner, if the partner is willing."

Denham mopped his brow. It was going to be even more difficult than he had anticipated.

"Is it, then, a question of the capital the partner is to bring in?" asked Miss Gale, anxious to help him.

"No, no. I don't wish any capital. I have enough for both. And the business is very prosperous, Miss Gale—and—and has been."

The young woman raised her eyebrows in surprise.

"You surely don't intend to share the profits with a partner who brings no capital into the business?"

"Yes—yes, I do. You see, as I said, I have no need for more capital."

"Oh, if that is the case, I think you should consult Mr. Rogers before you commit yourself."

"But Rogers wouldn't understand."

"I'm afraid I don't understand either. It seems to me a foolish thing to do—that is, if you want my advice."

"Oh, yes, I want it. But it isn't as foolish as you think. I should have had a partner long ago. That is where I made the mistake. I've made up my mind on that."

"Then I don't see that I can be of any use—if your mind is already made up."

"Oh, yes, you can. I'm a little afraid that my offer may not be accepted."

"It is sure to be, if the man has any sense. No fear of such an offer being refused. Offers like that are not to be had every day. It will be accepted."

"Do you really think so, Miss Gale? I am glad that is your opinion. Now, what I wanted to consult you about, is the form of the offer. I would like to put it—well—delicately, you know, so that it would not be refused, nor give offence."

'YOU WANT ME TO WRITE A LETTER TO HIM?'"

"I see. You want me to write a letter to him?"

"Exactly, exactly," cried Denham with some relief. He had not thought of sending a letter before. Now, he wondered why he had not thought of it. It was so evidently the best way out of a situation that was extremely disconcerting.

"Have you spoken to him about it?"

"To him? What him?"

"To your future partner, about the proposal?"

"No, no. Oh, no. That is—I have spoken to nobody but you."

"And you are determined not to speak to Mr. Rogers before you write?"

"Certainly not. It's none of Rogers's business."

"Oh, very well," said Miss Gale shortly, bending over her writing-pad.

It was evident that her opinion of Denham's wisdom was steadily lowering. Suddenly, she looked up.

"How much shall I say the annual profits are? Or do you want that mentioned?"

"I—I don't think I would mention that. You see, I don't wish this arrangement to be carried out on a monetary basis—not altogether."

"On what basis then?"

"Well—I can hardly say. On a personal basis, perhaps. I rather hope that the person—that my partner—would, you know, like to be associated with me."

"On a friendly basis, do you mean?" asked Miss Gale, mercilessly.

"Certainly. Friendly, of course—and perhaps more than that."

Miss Gale looked up at him with a certain hopelessness of expression.

"Why not write a note inviting your future partner to call upon you here, or anywhere else that would be convenient, and then discuss the matter?"

Denham looked frightened.

"I thought of that, but it wouldn't do. No; it wouldn't do. I would much rather settle everything by correspondence."

"I am afraid I shall not be able to compose a letter that will suit you. There seem to be so many difficulties. It is very unusual."

"That is true, and that is why I knew no one but you could help me, Miss Gale. If it pleases you, it will please me."

Miss Gale shook her head, but, after a few moments, she said, "How will this do?"

"Dear Sir"——

"Wait a moment," cried Mr. Denham; "that seems rather a formal opening, doesn't it? How would it read if you put it 'Dear friend'?"

"If you wish it so." She crossed out the "sir" and substituted the word suggested. Then, she read the letter:

"Dear Friend,—I have for some time past been desirous of taking a partner, and would be glad if you would consider the question and consent to join me in this business. The business is, and has been for several years, very prosperous, and, as I shall require no capital from you, I think you will find my offer a very advantageous one. I will——"

"I—I don't think I would put it quite that way," said Denham, with some hesitation. "It reads as if I were offering everything, and that my partner—well, you see what I mean."

"It's the truth," said Miss Gale, defiantly. "Better put it on the friendly basis, as you suggested a moment ago."

"'SHALL YOU WANT ME AGAIN TO-DAY?'"

"I didn't suggest anything, Mr. Denham. Perhaps it would be better if you would dictate the letter exactly as you want it. I knew I could not write one that would please you."

"It does please me, but I'm thinking of my future partner. You are doing first-rate—better than I could do. But just put it on the friendly basis."

A moment later she read:

". . . . join me in this business. I make you this offer entirely from a friendly, and not from a financial, standpoint, hoping that you like me well enough to be associated with me."

"Anything else, Mr. Denham?"

"No. I think that covers the whole ground. It will look rather short, type-written, won't it? Perhaps you might add something to show that I shall be exceedingly disappointed if my offer is not accepted."

"No fear," said Miss Gale. "I'll add that though. 'Yours truly,' or 'Yours very truly'?"

"You might end it 'Your friend.'"

The rapid click of the typewriter was heard for a few moments in the next room, and then Miss Gale came out with the completed letter in her hand.

"Shall I have the boy copy it?" she asked.

"Oh, bless you, no!" answered Mr. Denham, with evident trepidation.

The young woman said to herself, "He doesn't want Mr. Rogers to know, and no wonder. It is a most unbusiness-like proposal."

"'YOU SENT THAT LETTER TO MY ADDRESS!"'

Then she said aloud, "Shall you want me again to-day?"

"No, Miss Gale; and thank you very much."

Next morning, Miss Gale came in to Mr. Denham's office with a smile on her face.

"You made a funny mistake last night, Mr. Denham," she said, as she took off her wraps.

"Did I?" he asked, in alarm.

"Yes. You sent that letter to my address. I got it this morning. I opened it, for I thought it was for me, and that perhaps you did not need me to-day. But I saw at once that you put it in the wrong envelope. Did you want me to-day?"

It was on his tongue to say, "I want you every day," but he merely held out his hand for the letter, and looked at it as if he could not account for its having gone astray.

The next day Miss Gale came late, and she looked frightened. It was evident that Denham was losing his mind. She put the letter down before him and said:

"You addressed that to me the second time, Mr. Denham."

There was a look of haggard anxiety about Denham that gave colour to her suspicions. He felt that it was now or never.

"Then why don't you answer it, Miss Gale?" he said gruffly.

She backed away from him.

"Answer it?" she repeated faintly.

"Certainly. If I got a letter twice, I would answer it."

"What do you mean?" she cried, with her hand on the door-knob.

"Exactly what the letter says. I want you for my partner. I want to marry you, and—financial considerations——"

"Oh!" cried Miss Gale, in a long-drawn, quivering sigh. She was doubtless shocked at the word he had used, and fled to her type-writing room, closing the door behind her.

Richard Denham paced up and down the floor for a few moments, then rapped lightly at her door, but there was no response. He put on his hat and went out into the street. After a long and aimless walk, he found himself again at his place of business. When he went in, Rogers said to him:

"Miss Gale has left, sir."

"Has she?"

"Yes, and she has given notice. Says she is not coming back, sir."

"Very well."

He went into his own room and found a letter marked "personal" on his desk. He tore it open, and read in neatly type-written characters:

"I have resigned my place as typewriter girl, having been offered a better situation. I am offered a partnership in the house of Richard Denham. I have decided to accept the position, not so much on account of its financial attractions, as because I shall be glad, on a friendly basis, to be associated with the gentleman I have named. Why did you put me to all that worry writing that idiotic letter, when a few words would have saved ever so much bother? You evidently *need* a partner. My mother will be pleased to meet you any time you call. You have the address.—Your friend,

"MARGARET GALE."

"Rogers!" shouted Denham, joyfully.

"Yes, sir," answered that estimable man, putting his head into the room.

"Advertise for another typewriter girl, Rogers."

"Yes, sir," said Rogers.

Mrs. Besant believes in ghosts.

"Sir, I do not approve of your article. There are no such things as ghosts, and it is *wicked* to photograph them." So wrote an irate subscriber to the editor of a journal which had contained an article on "Spirit Photography." Now, I do believe in ghosts, though I do not give them the exalted position awarded to them by my Spiritualist friends. I believe there are ghosts belonging to living and to dead bodies; that each of us has a ghost inside him, which is available as the vehicle of our intelligence if we want to travel in supersensuous regions, and that occasionally the ghost may slip out without asking permission, and may "produce phenomena" puzzling, and even distressing, to the uninstructed mind. I know a lady whose ghost, or astral double, has on two or three occasions slipped out of the physical body and has presented itself to its owner, in her own exact image and likeness, much to her discomfort. This is unusual—and it is conduct not to be commended—but it is not unparalleled. Now astral doubles play a very considerable part in many Spiritualistic *séances*, and in all of those at which materialisations occur. Physical phenomena are largely due to them, elementals also taking part in these. Rappings, tiltings, levitation of objects, playing on musical instruments—and playing often shockingly badly, be it remarked—with all the host of allied trivial manifestations, are performed by the medium's astral double and by elementals. The spirit, the loftiest part of man's nature, that which allies him to the Divine, has neither part nor lot in these pranks. We do not say, during incarnation, that our spirit pokes the fire or carries a tray upstairs; why should we ascribe these functions to it when it is excarnated? I do not deny that an incarnated spiritual intelligence may temporarily leave its body, and communicate with excarnated spiritual intelligences by rising to their plane, but the results of such communications will not appear in the jumping of tables or of other household furniture.

The tricky sprites that amuse themselves at *séances*, and that take the medium's astral double as a convenient material basis for their phenomena, play quaint jokes enough at times. One day, sitting with a friend at a small table often used for these experiments, the table spelt out a long and precise story, given in the character of the spirit of the Rev. Mr. F——, who, it assured us, had died at Youghal, and now sent a message to his daughter. It also related various things that had happened at Mr. F——'s house before he left on the journey that terminated fatally. Finally, we were referred to the death-entries in the *Times* of a particular date. As I was engaged in testing the phenomena that occurred, I bought the *Times* of that date, but found no entry of the death, and three days later Mr. F—— walked into my office, having been to Youghal, indeed, but having brought his body away with him when he left it! During all my own "sittings" I learned nothing important which I did not know before, and I have always been struck with the trivial character of the communications; even in "trance orations" there is nothing more than can be written or said under normal conditions by the working of a brain of good ability. But I have no doubt, from my own enquiries, that persons who have left their physical bodies—but who are none the less living men, for all they have passed through the gateway called Death—can, for a period after the death of the body varying much in length, communicate with those they have left. But such communications delay their progress, and bring about, for them, distressing and disturbing conditions, holding them to earth-life by disorderly and anti-natural methods. As a Theosophist, having learned something of the *post-mortem* states of men, I am bound to protest against the intrusion of disturbing influences into those states, as well as to warn people of the danger of putting themselves, in a receptive and passive state, in the way of the influences of the elementals and "earthbound spirits" who crowd to "circles." No wisdom is gained from them, while the nervous system is often injured, and the passive state, deliberately produced, is apt to become normal.

And tells of tricky sprites

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Anybody who takes the trouble can satisfy himself that consciousness may be approached by other avenues besides those of the senses, and that some of these may connect it with objective realities imperceptible to ordinary sight. For investigators it will soon become certain that the super-physical world is connected with human life after death. But we have reason to infer that Nature is vast and complicated in this region or phase as in others. Sensible people, therefore, as soon as they realise that they are on the track of real knowledge concerning ultra-mundane states of being, will qualify themselves as well as they can for interpreting its strange and

A. P. Sinnett on spiritual science.

bewildering phenomena, and will look up what has been written on the subject by previous investigators. They will perhaps be surprised to find that, not merely from classical, but from pre-classical ages, books have been published relating to the inquiry they are concerned with. Hermetic books, Oriental sacred books, treatises on alchemy (which was occult science in disguise), and, latest of all, Theosophic books. All these together embody a great coherent statement, to the effect that the senses by which ultra-physical facts are cognised, can be enormously expanded by earnest and well-directed effort; that people who have made such effort have acquired extensive knowledge concerning realms of being lying beyond those which modern casual spiritualism, mesmerism, and psychic research penetrate.

* * * *

And early mystic writings.

It was my great good fortune, many years ago, to be put in communication with some persons who had done this, and I was made witness of some of the powers wielded by adepts. I was also, in progress of time, instructed in such part of their knowledge concerning the origin and destinies of humanity as they thought it desirable to give out at this stage of human evolution. I delivered the message so received to the world in the book called *Esoteric Buddhism*. That was the first plain, intelligible exposition of the laws governing the higher spiritual development of man that has been published to the world within historic periods. Many other Theosophical books have since been written enlarging in some respects the first teaching. I have been enabled also to issue various fugitive writings from time to time, adding to the great current exposition of occult truth. These will ultimately, I hope, be recast, together with yet further teaching, in a new book I contemplate.

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The possibilities of spiritual progress.

Let me finally add that the early privilege of communication with the mighty teachers from whom all this enlightenment came—the same as those from whom Mme. Blavatsky derived hers—has never been altogether intermitted, and is on a firmer foundation at the present day than it has ever rested before. I have thus come to understand and reverently appreciate the great possibilities of spiritual progress which lie before us all, if only we are serious enough to study, and wise enough to avail ourselves of them. Natural forces have guided primitive humanity to its present stage of advancement. Now nineteenth century people must begin to help Nature, so to speak, in accomplishing the task of their own further evolution, if they wish to come into the conditional inheritance that awaits them. To show them how thus to help themselves is the great purpose of Theosophy.

Phillpotts tells a weird tale.

I particularly like to hear about those rooms that nobody ever comes out of alive. They go in with a revolver and any amount of confidence, and are found next morning, stark and stiff, with a horrible glazed smile on their livid faces. If they take in a dog, he gets a horrible glazed smile too. There was a room in Guernsey that I heard of only the other day. Nobody knew what sort of ghost haunted it, because those who saw the thing never lived to give details. But at length three resolute young men determined to spend the entire night there. They were locked in, and every preparation made for treating their remains with consideration when the morning should dawn. One was to watch while the others slept. The wind whistled round that haunted habitation; a wan finger of moonlight shot through the naked boughs of the trees which hid the place; creepy noises and rustlings broke the silence; everything, in fact, was properly done; and the young men played "nap" and smoked till three in the morning, with never a thought for the life-destroying vision that lurked at hand. Then two of the watchers went to sleep, and he who had lost most money at "nap" sat up in a corner and smoked and thought. Suddenly a dark shadow hurried past him on the wall, and, looking up, he observed a weird, black, hairy insect, between a crab and a spider, stealing along to where his friends lay asleep. It appeared to pass down the wall between a couch and the side of the room, but a few moments later, he saw it again upon the pillow by his friend's head. Then, with terrible rapidity, it approached the other sleeper, as he lay in a further corner. But this was too much for the watcher; he alarmed his second friend, and the monstrous insect vanished as it had come, through a hole in the roof. The two men then endeavoured to rouse their sleeping companion, but he had passed beyond human ken for ever. The man was quite dead, and subsequent investigation showed a small wound, behind his ear, where the spider, or crab, or devil, had inserted a drop of poison and so slain him. This story is good, but the man who told it to me spoilt it by asserting that the mysterious and awful insect was ultimately captured, and may now be seen in spirits of wine at the Guernsey Museum. Anything like detail or definition ruins a ghost story.

* * * *

And gives a personal experience.

Not but what I can tell you a real, true ghost story if you want it. I saw the ghost myself, so the incident is, of course, absolutely authentic. It happened that a White Lady haunted the bedroom I always gave to visitors. When I took the house the landlord admitted that there was a ghost, but assured me that so perfect was her beauty, and so exquisite her proportions, that people came for miles to see her. Instead of lowering the rent on account of the White Lady, he actually proposed to increase it. But reports from troubled

sleepers led me to suspect the apparition's charms were overrated, and to convince myself of the truth I hit upon a rather ingenious scheme. Everybody who knows anything about right ghosts will tell you that they are, to some extent, luminous or phosphorescent, and my idea was to photograph the White Lady by her own light, as one does with a flash of electricity. I set the camera in position, made the room pitch dark, and doubted not, that when my spectre passed the lens, she would leave a picture of herself upon the sensitised plate within. Midnight was her favourite hour, and about five minutes past twelve I went up to get the apparatus and see if I could develop a picture. Judge of my amazement when I found a dim white heap prone on the floor of the haunted chamber. The White Lady, while stealing silently across the room, had suddenly seen the weird form of my camera before her. In the darkness she had taken it for some unknown horror, with three spindle legs and one eye at the tip of its nose. Overcome by the shock of such a spectacle, the poor spectre had fainted upon the spot. I restored her to consciousness with a burnt feather. She was not a bad-looking ghost, but nothing to make any fuss about. I said: "You must promise never to haunt this room again, or I shall arrange something much more terrible than a photograph machine here. You may trip about the passages, after the family has retired; you may spend as much time as you like in the cellar and in the kitchen; you may infest the scullery also, but I won't have you in the bedrooms. Now, promise me, or we shall quarrel." She promised reluctantly, then disappeared through a wardrobe. And what is more, the White Lady kept her word. If you want a true, authentic tale, there you are.

* * * *

Tracy yarns of an Indian ghost.

There's a man out in India who doesn't believe in the supernatural, but has a great respect for ghosts. The man I allude to holds high command just now. One night I had the good fortune to sit next him at dinner. The conversation chanced to turn upon the case of a Tommy Atkins who had been court-martialled for sleeping at his post whilst on guard, but whose company commander urged in extenuation that the man was completely wearied from acting as a volunteer hospital-assistant during a severe outbreak of cholera. "Here in barracks the excuse might hold good," said the General. "On service, he should be shot after five minutes' notice." He uttered the latter words so seriously that I looked up with some curiosity. "Yes," he continued, in a lower tone, "I was once nearly executed myself for the same offence. A good many years ago, when I was a young sub, we were after a rebellious section of the Hassanzais, led by a cashiered subadar, who deserted from his regiment through sheer pride. Our men were dead beat after a long march, so I

volunteered to do sentry-go on the crest of a hill commanding our position until relieved at dawn. I went on at eleven, and was visited by the rounds at twelve, one, and two. When they left me on the last occasion, I placed my rifle with fixed bayonet against the trunk of a tree which had been struck by lightning, sat down upon the torn-off branch, and straightway fell fast asleep.

* * * *

"How long the physical overcame the mental I don't know. When, in an agony of shame, I sprang to my feet, I could see, right in front—for a bright moon lit up the landscape very distinctly—a confused mob of Ghazis. As I gazed, they melted away from my sight. My first thought was that they had surprised the camp and murdered every soul. So I reached over for my rifle, with the deliberate intention of blowing my head into small pieces, when a voice sounded close behind, 'You were so keen looking to the front, old chap, that you didn't hear us coming up. Another hour, and you can get a wink of sleep.' It was the officer of the watch with visiting rounds, so all was safe!

Who did sentry-go?

* * * *

"We took the village, and managed to secure ex-subadar Ram Singh alive. Whilst we were rigging up a gallows from our strongest tent-poles, he cursed the tribesmen, and made a short speech. 'Had these harem-born ones,' he said, 'the hearts of even the dogs who were their fathers, you would not have been here, sahibs, to do this thing. When the moon climbed over the Bara-koh last night, and you were all laid in the sleep of tired men, I led these illegitimates against you. But on the top of the hill which hid your camp they saw the ghost of Nundoo, the headman of the village, whom I stabbed to death yesterday, because his son was guiding you hither. As he died, he swore to be revenged, and now his ghost, armed with gun and bayonet, stopped our path. Yet, had not the lives of these dogs run cold, the spirit, and you, sahibs, would have been vanquished. I have spoken.' Afterwards, I walked up to the scene of the previous night's vigil. The bark of the tree, against which my rifle rested, had been stripped down by the electric fluid, also tearing off the huge limb which provided me with a seat. An odd resemblance to a human figure clothed in white was thus created. The moonlight shining full upon this, with the added effect of the rifle with fixed bayonet, was quite enough for the superstitious Hassanzais. So you see it was a close thing whether I or Ram Singh should then be attracting the kites and jackals. I naturally hold very strong views upon the punishment for such a crime as sleeping whilst on guard."

It was the spirit of Nundoo, the headman.

Alden likes ghosts.

I once lived in the Palazzo Contarini delle Figure, at Venice, which being some four hundred years old, with mysterious dark rooms and garrets constructed especially with an eye to making ghosts comfortable, was naturally full of them. There are a good many houses in Venice which are haunted by mild and inoffensive ghosts, but this particular palace, and a certain Casa degli Spiriti, which stands alone on the edge of the Northern lagoon, have the reputation of being the only houses in Venice where the ghosts are dangerous. Now, one of the reasons why I moved into this palace was the fact that it *was* haunted. I rather like ghosts. Madame Blavatsky introduced me to quite a number of them, and I always found them well-behaved and inoffensive, even when they were not particularly interesting. For several weeks after moving in, I waited in vain for the ghosts to call on me. I even went up into the garret without a light on a particularly stormy night, and mentioned that I should be glad to receive any ghost that would do me the honour to make me a visit, but not one responded. However, a little later they partially accepted the invitation, and then I was sorry that I had given it.

* * * *

They knock him up.

They began by knocking on the wall just at the head of my bed. It was a solid brick wall about three feet thick, and I can't imagine where the ghosts stood when they knocked. Then they amused themselves by exploding spiritual dynamite—I suppose it was—all over the house. I would be sitting quietly in my library when there would be a tremendous crack as if the whole side of the house had split open. Only that and nothing more. I could not see that the ghosts were dangerous, but they certainly seemed to be weak-minded; for no one can make me believe that a ghost who spends his nights in knocking on the wall, or in trying to make people think that a house which has stood since Columbus discovered America, and is as solid to-day as the Pyramid of Cheops, is about to fall into ruins, is a ghost with either a strong or a cultivated intellect. But one night I had reason to think more highly of my ghosts' abilities. I was lying in bed alone in a room that was forty-five feet long and, say, twenty feet high, and which seemed to swallow up all the furniture that I could put into it, and still looked as if it were empty. Suddenly I heard just outside my window, which opened on the Grand Canal, the most weird and appalling wail that could possibly be imagined. I never knew before how a lost soul wails, but I think I know now. The sound was low, but perfectly distinct, and as mournful as if it came from the proof-reader of a comic weekly.

I said to myself, "Now, I hope you are satisfied! This is what comes of fooling with ghosts." And I made a resolution that if I ever lived to see the morning I would never again pretend that I liked ghostly society. The invisible Thing was not in the least appeased by my humble frame of mind. It continued to wail, and I knew from the direction of the sound that it must be sitting on my window-ledge, which was several feet wide. I felt sure that it would presently enter through the open window, and cultivate my nearer acquaintance. Why didn't I run? Well! you just try being shut up in a bedroom in the dark with a ghost, and see if you are brave enough to risk getting out of bed and giving that ghost a chance to lay hold of a flying heel as you try to rush from the bed to the door. I simply lay and wished that I had been a better man. I thought of a pun that I had made a fortnight before, and I wondered whether this was the awful consequence of that act. Still the Thing wailed on, and at every wail my pulse sank, and my teeth braced up and made a fresh effort to chatter themselves loose. All at once, I broke out laughing. No! the strain had not been too much for my delicately organised brain. I laughed because I recognised in the wail of my ghostly visitor the cooing of one of the Venetian doves, who was probably suffering from an indigestion caused by over-indulgence in the corn which tourists are perpetually giving to the gluttonous little wretches. No sooner had I found that my ghost was nothing but a dove than I saw how foolish it was to be afraid of a ghost, and wondered how anybody could be weak enough to yield to such a fear. I never saw a ghost in the Contarini palace, but to this day I do wonder who or what it was that knocked so tirelessly on the walls, and made such elaborate pretences of blowing up the palace.

And he does not repeat the invitation.

* * * *

I was staying in the country house of an old friend of mine—a lady who in her maiden days enjoyed the questionable advantage of being considered one of the most marvellous mediums in existence, but who now, having married and become the mother of a family, has long given up "sitting" as a practice. We never held a regular *séance* whilst I was with her. We only walked and talked and drove together, as old friends will do, and yet the most wonderful manifestations were constantly taking place in our presence, both by day and candle-light. The most remarkable of these—at least, to me—were letters, which were written to me, day after day, in the handwriting of a friend who died thirty years ago in India, and whose writing my hostess had never seen. These letters, which spoke of my most private affairs, and were always signed with my friend's name, J. G. Powles, were found in all sorts of places and at all sorts of times,

Florence Marryat tells of a letter-writing spirit.

until I decided at last—although I never questioned the perfect faith of my hostess for one minute—to put the validity of my correspondence beyond all doubt. When I institute tests of Spiritualism, it is not for my own satisfaction, or to make sure of the medium, but that I may be able (as in this case) to render my story credible for others.

* * * *

Who steals stationery.

These letters had always been written on my professional paper, which bore my name and address. On counting the sheets, I found I had forty-six left. I tied these sheets together with cotton, numbering them so as to make sure of no mistake, and, folding them in a large piece of paper, placed the packet in my writing-case and locked it. The case I put in my travelling trunk, which I also locked, securing the key round my neck. I did not mention what I had done to my hostess, and I quite thought I had put a spoke in Mr. Powles's wheel. However, as we were sitting very quietly together that same evening, about seven o'clock, when it was quite light, and in a room apart from my bedroom, the leather writing-case was suddenly thrown through the air into my lap. It was still locked. On opening it, I found a fresh letter inside from J. G. Powles, written in ink, and addressed to me. I then told my hostess what I had done, and we visited my bedroom together, where we found the travelling trunk locked, just as I had left it in the morning. Indeed! how could it have been otherwise, when the key was still in the bosom of my dress? I wish I could give the letter *verbatim* here, but it related to such private matters that I should be violating the secrets of others by doing so. All I can say is, that if people wish to see the many letters that were written to me during this visit, they are welcome to do so. The last paragraph ran thus:—"I have taken a lot of your paper, but you should not tie it up with cotton. I shall keep your lace but return your pen." N.B.—The pen had been thrown into my lap with the writing-case. When I opened my box I found a lace fichu missing. I locked the box again, and went downstairs. The next morning, as my hostess and I were in my bedroom after breakfast, I said to her, "I am going to unlock my box and see if Powles has put back my lace." When I had opened the box, however, the fichu was still missing, and I exclaimed, laughing, "Oh, that bothering boy! I hope he is not going to keep it altogether, for it is the last clean one I have left!" As I spoke the words, the lace fichu came flying through the air right into my face. "'Tis true, 'tis true!"—but I cannot add, "and pity 'tis, 'tis true."

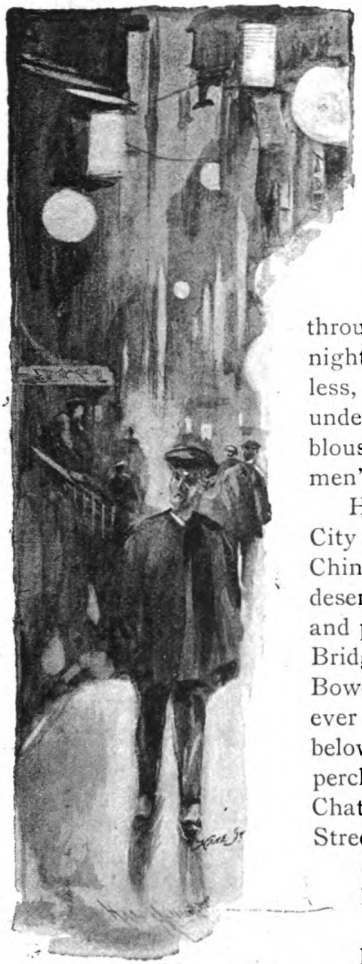
SHE THREW THE PIGTAIL AROUND HIS NECK AND PULLED IT TIGHT UNDER THE CHIN."

THE IDLER.

Quong Fin.

(A Bit from New York's Chinese Quarter.)

By Arthur Sperry. Illustrations by Hal Hurst.



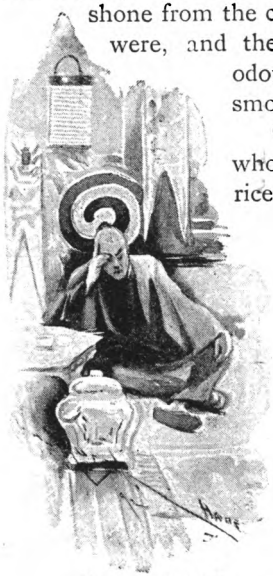
HE was rather tall for a Chinaman, five feet and six inches perhaps, but otherwise, from his soft black felt hat, with a yard of slender queue coiled up under it, to the cork soles of his blue and white shoes that made no sound as he walked over the wet bricks of the pavement, he looked like any one of the hundreds of other Chinamen that slouched through Mott Street at eleven o'clock at night. His face was as utterly expressionless, and his hands were as far out of sight under the flowing sleeves of his black blouse, as were any of the other Chinamen's.

He had come over alone on a Jersey City ferryboat, walked as rapidly as a Chinaman can be expected to walk across deserted Broadway and City Hall Park, and past the black entrance to the Brooklyn Bridge, up through Park Row to The Bowery, where nothing is ever clean, or ever quiet, or ever commonplace. Just below the Elevated Railroad station, perched on its forest of steel posts over Chatham Square, he turned into Mott Street, and was in Chinatown, that acre of quaint viciousness that hasn't its like in the wide world.

Some two hundred old tenement houses filled with Chinamen, at the rate of six to each of the little rooms, and more if there is room for more to lie down—that is Chinatown.

T T

Now, at eleven o'clock, in every room there is a fan-tan game or an opium joint, except in the apartments occupied by the Chinamen who can afford independent establishments and young white girl wives. Quong Tin, our tall Chinaman, walked along dejectedly. He looked up to where the red and yellow lanterns swung in the bamboo balconies that projected from the upper stories of the houses, where ten-foot-square restaurants were located high above the narrow strip of wet, slimy cobblestones that separated the equally wet and slimy brick foot-pavements. Dim lights shone from the cellarways where the cheaper dens of evil were, and the air was heavy with the indescribable odour of cooking opium and Chinese tobacco smoked in thousands of little brass pipes.



"HE SAT DOWN."

"Let's go smoke," said a girl of nineteen, whose face was like a mask with its coating of rice powder and rouge, putting her arm through Quong Tin's.

"Me no got money," Quong said, shaking her off.

A few steps further on he stopped just opposite where the great green lantern swung in front of the Joss House, and forcing his way through the knot of frowsy girls at the doorway, entered one of the old tenements whose upper windows were dotted with red and yellow lanterns. Down a narrow hallway that led back from the street he reached a stairway in which, two flights up, flared a gas jet. The stairway was crowded with Chinamen passing up and down, all chattering in Chinese, but none of them spoke to the stranger. Going through the open door beside the gas jet at the third landing, Quong Tin entered one of the better class of Chinese restaurants, and sat down on a soiled cushion at one of the little low, round tables that crowded the floor of the narrow room. Calling for dinner, he leaned back on his cushion, and stared gloomily at the grotesque paper dragons and bright-coloured banners that hid the low ceiling. He would eat his dinner, he mused, and by that time the shallow-pursed Chinamen would have been cleared out of the fan-tan rooms, and he would play, just as he had been doing for nearly a month. He had won—won

what would be a fortune to most Chinamen, and had played in every fan-tan place in Chinatown. But his good luck angered him. To his superstitious mind it meant ill-luck to the one project that filled his mind.

As he was finishing his sixteen-course dinner, and gulping down his fortieth little cup of tea, he almost wished his luck would change, and that he could lose money that night. Then perhaps he would find Liz. Not Sam Moy's Liz, nor Chee Ling's Liz, nor Tu Fin's Liz, nor yet Chung Sin's Liz—he had seen all of them, misled by one false scent after another. It was the Liz of Yen Lip, the luckiest gambler in Chicago, who had won all his money and stolen his pretty white girl wife, that he wanted to find. Liz had told him before she went away with Yen Lip, he remembered, that she could not love him unless he had lots of money. Now he had lots of money, a silk bag full of ten and twenty and one hundred dollar bills and shining gold pieces hanging close under his left armpit, and he couldn't find Liz.

As it was too early for the fan-tan games to be at their best when he got through with his dinner, Quong Tin went around to the Chinese theatre in a Doyers Street cellar, where the famous Hop Chin Lung was beginning the third night of his great monologue in the tenth act of "The Dragon's Breath." Once inside the theatre, Quong Tin was almost tempted to abandon his weary search, curl up on one of the bunks that surrounded the square stage in the centre of the cellar, and spend the night smoking opium. If he only had Liz to cook the brown "dub" over the tiny peanut-oil flame for him! His eyes dimmed as he thought of what had been—of what he had lost. As he forced the starting tears back into his heathen heart, and looked across the theatre to the double-priced bunks, each enclosed with a pair of short red curtains across its front that allowed the occupants to listen to the play without being seen, he reeled and fell back against a vacant bunk behind him. A waiter had pulled back the red curtains of one of the bunks on the other side to hand in another "toy" full of "dub." Through the opening Quong Tin saw Liz's face, fairer than ever, with its crown of golden curls. She laid on her side, one white hand hidden in her yellow curls as she leaned on her elbow, while with the other she held a ball of opium over the flame of the peanut-oil lamp in the centre of the square bunk, and twirled the silver wire, at the end of which the opium sputtered, between her slender white fingers so that the "dub" should be well cooked through. Yen Lip was curled up

on the other side of the lamp, and when the pill of opium was cooked to a dark golden colour in the heat of the smokeless and odourless flame, Liz deftly moulded it into the round hole in the flat bowl of his pipe. Then, as he lit it over the lamp, and inhaled the heavy, velvety smoke deep into his lungs, a look of heavenly satisfaction spread over his fat yellow face. Quong Tin noticed that Liz's hand was laden with jewels, and his heart contracted with pain as he thought that she was probably happy. Yen Lip seemed to be sleeker and richer than ever.

"SHE HELD A BALL OF OPIUM OVER THE FLAME."

Quong Tin motioned for a waiter, and engaged the bunk next to the one where Liz was, the drawn-back curtains of which showed it to be unoccupied. Once in it but an inch of flimsy pine partition separated him from Liz. He heard her soft purring voice as she coaxed Yen Lip for a necklace of pearls. The same Liz still, thought Quong Tin. Liz had a low, sweet voice that made the pigeon English she talked sweetest music to him.

'You no gev me pearls I go way," Liz was saying, as she cooked another pill of opium for Yen Lip's pipe.

"All light, to-mollow," Yen answered drowsily, in the midst of the rosy dreams that were gathering in his brain with his eighth pipe.

In the heavy air Quong Tin could distinguish the odour of the cigarettes Liz was smoking as she cooked Yen's "dub," and he was glad because he knew that she would not begin to smoke the pipe til' Yen Lip was fast asleep. He cooked and smoked a pill of the opium the waiter had brought him to steady his quivering

nerves, but blew the smoke out without inhaling it so that he should not feel its drowsy charms. It was no time for drowsiness.

The two hundred people in the theatre talked in low tones, and Hop Chin Lung's ceaseless monologue made a deliciously dreary dominant to the soothing jumble of sounds. Soon Yen Lip's slow breathing showed that he was in the glorious stupor that fascinates opium smokers. Quong Tin ordered another "toy" full of opium, to be secure from interruption by the waiters, and pulled the little curtains in front of his bunk tight shut.

Liz coughed.

The first pipe always made Liz cough a little, Quong remembered.

He sat up, and thrusting his hand under his voluminous blouse, drew the silk bag from under his arm and around to his breast. Unfastening it, he took from one corner an off-colour diamond of considerable size set in a handsome ring. It was the handsomest jewel he had ever seen.

Back of the carelessly built bunks he had found there was a space of two or three inches between the board partition that separated them and the wall of the cellar. Putting the ring on to his first finger, and pushing it on as far as the first joint, he stuck his hand through the narrow opening. As it touched Liz's soft curls Quong Tin's heart beat so that he could hear it.

Long ago Liz had acquired the reptile-like inertia of the opium-smoking Chinaman. She turned her head slowly, and seeing the ring held toward her on the end of a yellow finger, she took it off and slipped it on one of her own fingers. The stone won her admiration at once. The hand that had brought the ring still rested palm upward on the cushion where her head had been. Liz dropped her soft little hand into it and grasped it with a hearty shake of thanks. Then, putting her face close to the opening through which the hand had come, she whispered, "Who there?"

"Quong Tin," was the answer, in an equally cautious whisper.

"How, Quong Tin. Much thanks," whispered Liz, putting her hand through the opening.

Quong Tin rapturously kissed its pink palm, soft and cool as a rose leaf—the Chinese lover's caress.

"Come in here see me, lil' gal," whispered Quong.

"No can. Wake up Yen Lip."

"You no likee Yen Lip?" asked Quong.

"Oh, he good, give me evlything," evaded Liz.

"No likee me?"

"You no got money."

"Me got fiftleen thousand dolla," whispered Quong impressively.

"Oh, Quong!" whispered Liz, and again the little white hand was thrust through the opening, and Quong kissed its palm ecstatically.

"Where you live?" Quong asked.

"Four Pell Stleet, three stairs, flont," whispered Liz.

"Me come to-mollow night when Yen Lip go."

"Show me money, Quong."

"To-mollow night, then we go way, anywhere, evlywhere."

"All light, Quong. Go Chicago first."

"All light, you be leady to-mollow night?"

"Yes," answered Liz, putting her hand through the opening again.

"Me go now," said Quong Tin, after he had again paid his devotions to its pink palm.

"Good-bye, Quong," said Liz.

"RAPTUROUSLY KISSED ITS PINK PALM."

Quong Tin stowed his treasure bag away under his left arm again, and slipping quietly out of his bunk, left the theatre. It was raining, but he did not notice it as he hurried down Park Row and across City Hall Park. At the Broadway side of the Park he stopped beside the line of cabs that waited in the rain for late fares. Park Row drug stores and City Hall cabbies never sleep.

Quong Tin took a silver dollar from the mysterious recesses of his clothes and went to the nearest cabman.

"Here dolla," he said. "You go four Pell Stleet eleven o'clock to-mollow night, takee lil' gal lide, then me gev you five dolla."

"That chink's crazy," said the hackman to the others who gathered around him as Quong Tin hurried on down Broadway.

"No he ain't," said one of the others. "He's laying his pipes to steal some other chink's girl. But she must be a beauty fer a chink ter give up six dollars fer a cab fer her."

Quong Tin pattered on through the rain down Broadway to Courtlandt Street, and so to the never-closed railway offices at the Courtlandt Street ferry.

"What time last tlain Chicago to-mollow night?" he asked the clerk in the Pullman sleeping-car office.

"Twelve fifteen," answered the clerk.

"How much sleep-ca, for lady?"

"Five dollars for one berth, ten dollars for a section."

"Give me section," said Quong Tin, handing the clerk a ten-dollar bill.

"'GIVE ME SECTION,' SAID QUONG TIN."

Then he bought two through tickets for Chicago, and stowed them away with the sleeping-car tickets in the silk bag where the money was. Hurrying back to the Chinese theatre, he reached it just as the Bowery shopkeepers were putting out their gas-lights, made unnecessary by the increasing light of the early morning. A thin line of Chinamen was straggling from the theatre, some of them still so locked in their opium dreams that they had to be supported along by their companions.

Quong Tin stopped across the street, and watched for Yen Lip and Liz. At last they came, Liz wide awake, but Yen Lip drowsy and grumbling. This augured well, thought Quong Tin, as he followed them till they disappeared into the narrow doorway of No. 4, Pell Street. "Liz no lie," he said to himself, with a feeling of relief, for he knew Liz—knew her almost as well as he

loved her—and understood how deception had become as natural to her as pigeon English.

With the instinctive cunning of a Chinaman, he knew that he should not remain in Chinatown through the day, much as he longed to be near Liz. Everything was arranged, and there was nothing for him to do but keep out of sight till night and hope that Yen Lip would not learn of his presence in Chinatown. He knew that when Liz tried she could seem as much a lady as anyone—so long as a lapse into pigeon English did not betray her. He knew, too, that when Yen Lip found that Liz had gone he would look for a girl with a Chinaman, not for a dignified lady in a parlour car and a Chinaman in the smoking car of the same train, where he would be. Not till they were safe in his friend Kin Hop's gambling house in Chicago would there be any indication that Liz was aught to the Chinaman that dogged her footsteps.

"THE SETTING OF THIS BEAUTY WAS QUAINT."

Quong Tin went back to Jersey City and spent the day with his happy thoughts. At nine o'clock in the evening he went over the ferry to New York, and half an hour later stood in an opposite doorway watching No. 4, Pell Street. About ten o'clock Yen Lip came out and started around to Mott Street. At the same time the dim light in one of the upper windows of No. 4 brightened a bit, and showed a delicately oval face crowned by a wreath of golden curls looking down into the street. As soon as Yen Lip turned the corner Quong Tin crossed the street and felt his way up the dark stairway to the third story. The door to one of the front rooms was open half an inch, and Liz was peering out into the dark hallway. In an instant Quong Tin was madly kissing her hands, her round white neck and her sunny curls.

"Don't make a noise, Quong," said Liz; "where's the money?"

Quong took out the silk bag filled with gold and bills, and Liz's eyes danced as she saw its contents. They were eyes that could dance—clear and blue as a baby's, with the lying light of innocence in their depths that only the blue eyes of women can harbour. Liz was very white, almost colourless—the result of the shut-up life she lived—but the texture of her soft skin was like that of the skin of a white grape. With her eyes shut she looked like a young Madonna. With them open their eloquent look of innocence made her face seem almost childish in its sweet simplicity.

"HE TORE IT OUT BY THE ROOTS."

The setting of this beauty was as quaint as her eyes were blue. Across the end of the room opposite the window was a low bunk draped with red and yellow silk, and in the centre of it an exquisite lacquered tray, on which laid two opium pipes, one of fine wood, yellowed with use, and the other a beautiful affair of ivory and fantastically-wrought silver, and a tiny lamp of silver with a shade of wonderfully thin onyx, or some similar stone, in which were cut queer figures of Chinese mythical beasts and beings. The walls and ceiling of the room were masses of bright-coloured silks, and the floor was covered with matting on which were scattered soft rugs and the cushions that served for chairs. The only traces of civilisation in the tiny Chinese boudoir were Liz's few toilet accessories.

As rapidly as he could Quong Tin told Liz of his plan. They must make haste, he explained, and get away before Yen Lip should come back.

"Yen Lip gone to play big fan-tan," said Liz. "He no come back till to-mollow."

"All light, we go now anyway. Calliage here now."

Liz was thinking how much Quong must love her to starve and save and steal for her these four years since she had left him in Chicago. "You do anything I say?" she asked him, looking into his eyes.

"Yes, sure."

"Cut off pigtail?"

Liz could not have made a more cruel demand. An orthodox Chinaman will part with any of his earthly possessions rather than lose an inch of his queue. Its destruction is the only thing in his creed that can irretrievably debar him from heaven. It means the loss of the soul itself.

"You no mean, Liz," almost sobbed Quong Tin.

"Yes. Me no love you if you have pigtail."

Silently Quong Tin uncoiled the shining braid. There were tears in his eyes and he shut them.

With a quick jerk and a sound like the tearing of tough paper he tore out by the roots the hundred hairs in the centre of his shaved crown on which hung the long queue.

"Me same as monkey now," he said, as he laid the long, slender braid of jetty hair that typified his soul across Liz's lap.

Liz did not speak. She was watching Yen Lip, who had crept in noiselessly, according to Liz's plan, and was just raising a loaded cane over Quong Tin's head. Liz had told him everything, and planned Quong Tin's murder for his money.

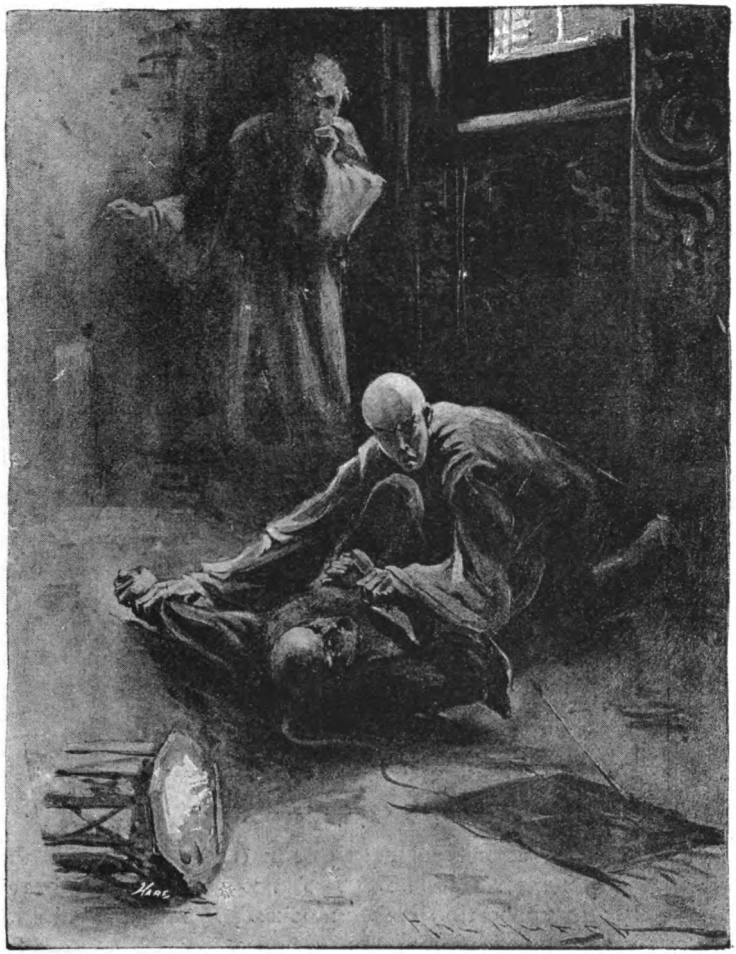
Yen Lip must have been nervous, for his blow was not a fair one, and instead of stunning, only dazed Quong Tin, who suddenly turned and grappled with his assailant, before he could strike again. He quickly had Yen on his back, and held his hands so that the knife that was always under Yen Lip's blouse could not be brought into use.

Liz had not spoken, but stood in the corner watching the struggle. Now she saw that something must be done. Noiselessly she crept over to where Quong Tin's pigtail laid. As she stepped behind her husband with the snake-like rope of his hair in her hand, he turned his head and asked, "No kill him?"

"Yes, kill him," answered Liz.

But before Quong Tin could move Liz had thrown the pigtail he had just sacrificed to her whim around his neck, and pulled it tight under his chin. His hold on Yen Lip's hands loosened, and

in an instant Yen's knife was plunged deep into his neck, and Quong Tin fell back on to the floor. But there was life enough left in him to grasp the loaded cane and wield it with the force of



"HE QUICKLY HAD YEN ON HIS BACK."

an infinite hate. The lump of lead at the end crashed against Yen Lip's temple, and the blow killed him. Quong Tin was fast bleeding to death.

"He kill me—I kill him—for you, Liz," he gasped. Liz was

busy picking up the money scattered over the floor during the struggle, and said nothing.

"Kiss me—lil' gal," he pleaded, his voice thick with the hoarseness of death.

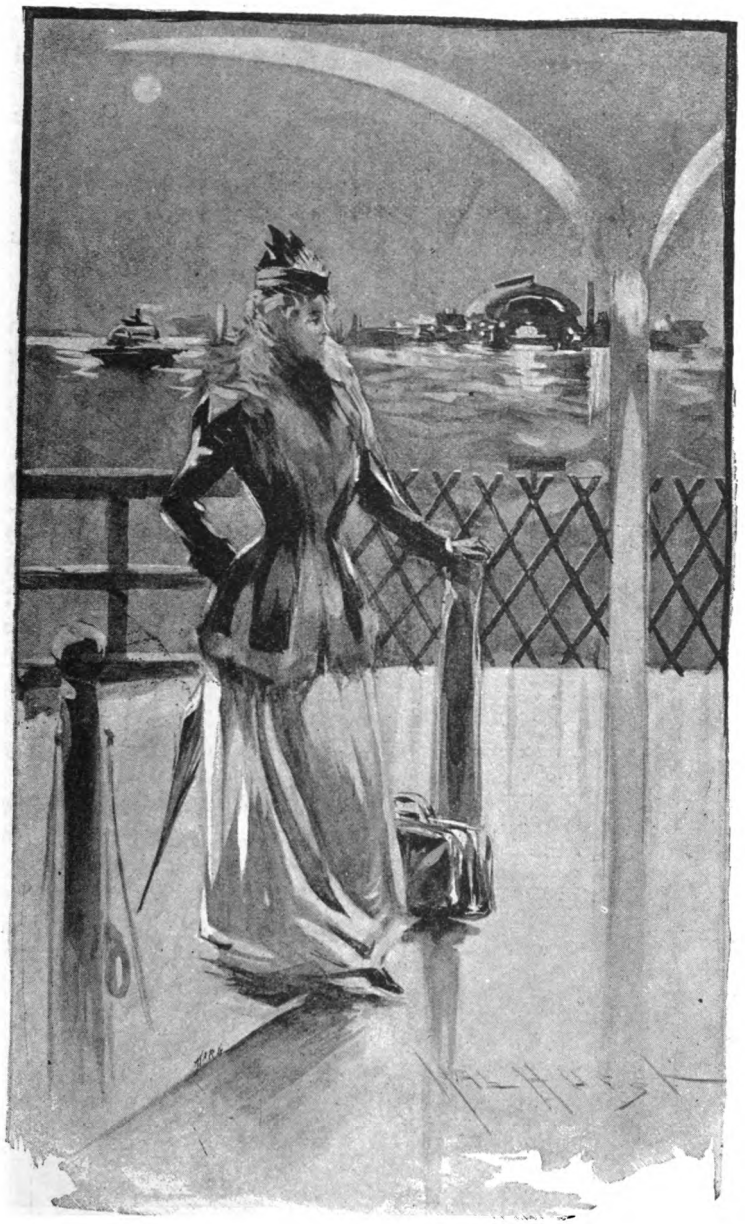
"Ugh! You pig," was all Liz said.

Quong Tin tried to raise his head, and gasped, "Please—lil' gal—one—." His head dropped back against Yen Lip's foot, and his eyes ceased to follow Liz as she moved about the room. He was dead.

"GOT HER SCISSORS AND CUT THE SILK CORD."

Liz got her scissors and cut the silk cord by which a flat Chinese key was hung around Yen Lip's neck, and pulling a heavy brass box from under the bunk, unlocked it. It was filled with gold and paper money, pearls and diamonds.

"Twenty thousand dollars at least," said Liz, under her breath, as she stuffed the contents of the brass box into a travelling bag. Then she emptied the contents of Quong Tin's silk bag in with them and slung the satchel from her shoulder by a strap. As she put on her hat and furs she looked out of the window and saw



"LIZ" STOOD OUT ON THE OPEN DECK."

the hack waiting, as Quong Tin had said it would be. She went out, locking the door carefully and putting the key in her pocket.

"Courtlandt Street ferry," she said to the driver, as he helped her in.

When the hackman opened the door and let her out under the electric light at the railroad ferry house, the big clock told her that it was twenty minutes before midnight, and that she had plenty of time to catch the 12.15 train for Chicago.

"Th' chink promised me five dollars," the hackman said, as she handed him a dollar.

"Well, go and get it from him," said Liz.

"I gets five dollars or I keeps the bag, see?" indicating an intention to keep the bag he had taken from Liz as he helped her to alight.

"What's he doing, miss? Trying to overcharge you, is he?" asked a policeman.

"Yes, sir," answered Liz. "He says he will not give me my satchel unless I give him five dollars."

Of course the policeman took the bag from the Jehu, escorted Liz on to the ferry boat, wished her a comfortable journey, and hoped that she would find her mother out of danger when she got to Philadelphia, for all of which he was amply rewarded by one smile from Liz's clear blue eyes.

Her furs were warm, and so Liz stood out on the open deck watching the dancing reflections of the shore lights on the black water of the North River. Half way across she dropped the key of the room where the two bodies laid into the water.

"The police won't find them for a week," she thought. "How good and heavy the bag feels. They'll never think of trying to find me."

"I'm tired of being gay," her thoughts ran on. "I'll go home to mother, tell her my husband is dead, and live like a lady from now on. Quong's sleeping-car tickets will come in just right. Now I won't have any trouble, and I can go right on the car and sleep."

Reading of the Great Divorce Case.

By Albert Chevalier and Fred Cape.

"Have you read this?"
"I've heard about it."

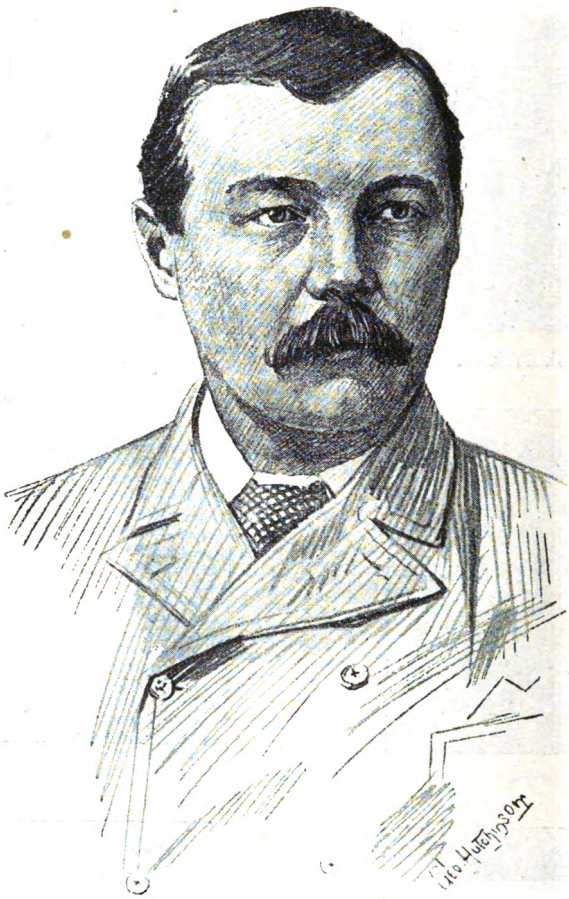
"Then why did she take her aunt with her?"
"Why, don't you see."

"Fancy that now."

"Well I'm——."

"That's good, isn't it?"

"The papers ought not to be allowed to publish such things.



Yours very truly
A Conan Doyle

My First Book.

VI.—JUVENILIA.

By A. Conan Doyle.

Illustrations by Geo. Hutchinson and Sydney Cowell.

IT is very well for the master craftsman with twenty triumphs behind him to look down the vista of his successes, and to recall how he picked out the path which has led him to fame, but for the tyro whose first book is perilously near to his last one it becomes a more invidious matter. His past presses too closely upon his present, and his reminiscences, unmellowed by the flight of years, are apt to be rawly and crudely personal. And yet even time helps me when I speak of my first work, for it was written seven and twenty years ago.

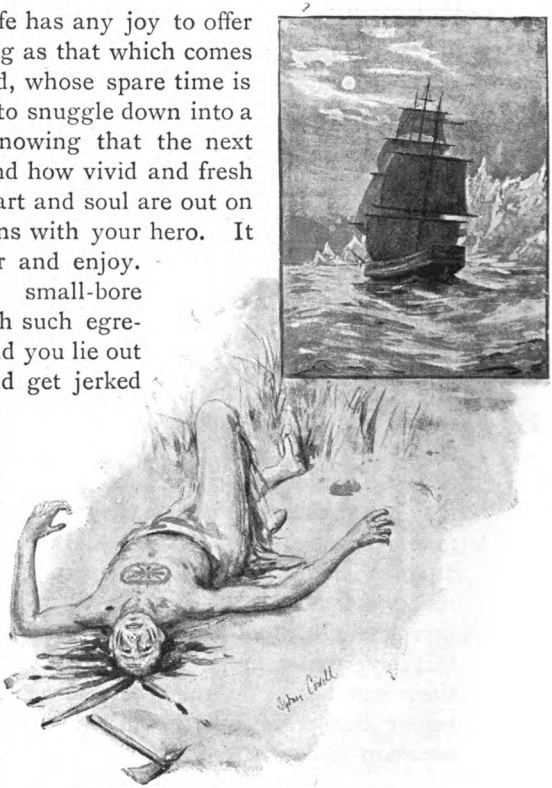
"I WAS SIX."

I was six at the time, and have a very distinct recollection of the achievement. It was written, I remember, upon foolscap paper, in what might be called a fine bold hand—four words to the line, and was illustrated by marginal pen-and-ink sketches by the author. There was a man in it, and there was a tiger. I forget which was the hero, but it didn't matter much, for they became blended into one about the time when the tiger met the man. I was a realist in the age of the Romanticists. I described at some length, both verbally and pictorially, the untimely end of that wayfarer. But when the tiger had absorbed him, I found myself slightly embarrassed as to how my story was to go on. "It is very easy to get people into scrapes, and very hard to get them out again," I remarked, and I have often had cause to repeat the precocious aphorism of my childhood. On this occasion the situation was beyond me, and my book, like my man, was engulfed in my tiger. There is an old family bureau with secret drawers, in which lie little locks of hair tied up in circles, and black silhouettes and dim daguerreotypes, and letters which seem to have been written in the lightest of straw-coloured inks. Somewhere there lies my primitive manuscript, where my

tiger, like a many-hooped barrel with a tail to it, still envelops the hapless stranger whom he has taken in.

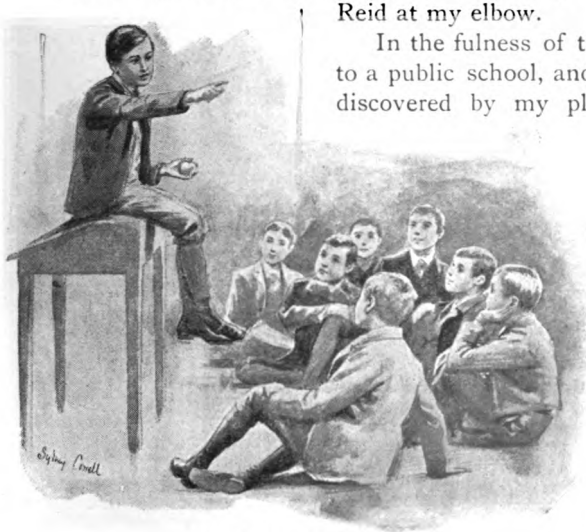
Then came my second book, which was told and not written, but which was a much more ambitious effort than the first. Between the two, four years had elapsed, which were mainly spent in reading. It is rumoured that a special meeting of a library committee was held in my honour, at which a byelaw was passed that no subscriber should be permitted to change his book more than three times a day. Yet, even with these limitations, by the aid of a well-stocked bookcase at home, I managed to enter my tenth year with a good deal in my head that I could never have learned in the class-rooms.

I do not think that life has any joy to offer so complete, so soul-filling as that which comes upon the imaginative lad, whose spare time is limited, but who is able to snuggle down into a corner with his book, knowing that the next hour is all his own. And how vivid and fresh it all is! Your very heart and soul are out on the prairies and the oceans with your hero. It is you who act and suffer and enjoy. You carry the long small-bore Kentucky rifle with which such egregious things are done, and you lie out upon the topsail yard, and get jerked by the flap of the sail into the Pacific, where you cling on to the leg of an albatross, and so keep afloat until the comic boatswain turns up with his crew of volunteers to handspike you into safety. What a magic it is, this stirring of the boyish heart and mind! Long ere I came to my teens I had traversed every sea, and knew the Rockies like my own back garden. How often had I sprung upon the back of the charging buffalo and so escaped him. It was an everyday



"ON THE PRAIRIES AND THE OCEANS."

emergency to have to set the prairie on fire in front of me in order to escape from the fire behind, or to run a mile down a brook to throw the bloodhounds off my trail. I had creased horses, I had shot down rapids, I had strapped on my mocassins hind-foremost to conceal my tracks, I had lain under water with a reed in my mouth, and I had feigned madness to escape the torture. As to the Indian braves whom I slew in single combats, I could have stocked a large graveyard, and, fortunately enough, though I was a good deal chipped about in these affairs, no real harm ever came of it, and I was always nursed back into health by a very fascinating young squaw. It was all more real than the reality. Since those days I have in very truth both shot bears and harpooned whales, but the performance was flat compared to the first time that I did it with Mr. Ballantyne or Captain Mayne Reid at my elbow.



"MY DÉBUT AS A STORY-TELLER.'

In the fulness of time I was packed off to a public school, and in some way it was discovered by my playmates that I had more than my share of the lore that they hankered after. There was my *début* as a story-teller. On a wet half-holiday I have been elevated on to a desk, and with an audience of little boys all squatting on the floor, with their chins upon their hands, I have talked myself husky over the misfortunes of my heroes. Week in and week out those unhappy men have battled and striven and groaned for the amusement of that little circle. I was bribed with pastry to continue these efforts, and I remember that I always stipulated for tarts down and strict business, which shows that I was born to be a member of the Authors' Society. Sometimes, too, I would stop dead in the very thrill of a crisis, and could only be set agoing again by apples. When I had got as far as "With his

left hand in her glossy locks, he was waving the blood-stained knife above her head, when——" or "Slowly, slowly, the door turned upon its hinges, and with eyes which were dilated with horror, the wicked Marquis saw——" I knew that I had my audience in my power. And thus my second book was evolved.

It may be that my literary experiences would have ended there nad there not come a time in my early manhood when that good old harsh-faced schoolmistress, Hard Times, took me by the hand. I wrote, and with amazement I found that my writing was accepted. *Chambers's Journal* it was which rose to the occasion, and I have had a kindly feeling for its mustard-coloured back ever since. Fifty little cylinders of manuscript did I send out during eight years, which described irregular orbits among publishers, and usually came back like paper boomerangs to the place that they had started from. Yet in time they all lodged somewhere or other. Mr. Hogg, of *London Society*, was one of the most constant of my patrons, and Mr. James Payn wasted hours of his valuable time in encouraging me to persevere. Knowing as I did that he was one of the busiest men in London, I never received one of his shrewd and kindly and most illegible letters without a feeling of gratitude and wonder.

WITH THE EDITOR'S COMPLIMENTS."

I have heard folk talk as though there were some hidden back door by which one may creep into literature, but I can say myself that I never had an introduction to any editor or publisher before doing business with them, and that I do not think that I suffered on that account. Yet my apprenticeship was a long and trying one. During ten years of hard work, I averaged less than fifty pounds a year from my pen. I won my way into the best journals, *Cornhill*, *Temple Bar*, and so on; but what is the use of that when the contributions to those journals must be anonymous? It is a system which tells very hardly against young authors. I saw with astonishment and pride that "Habakuk Jephson's Statement" in the *Cornhill* was attributed by critic after critic to Stevenson, but, overwhelmed as I was by the compliment, a word of the most

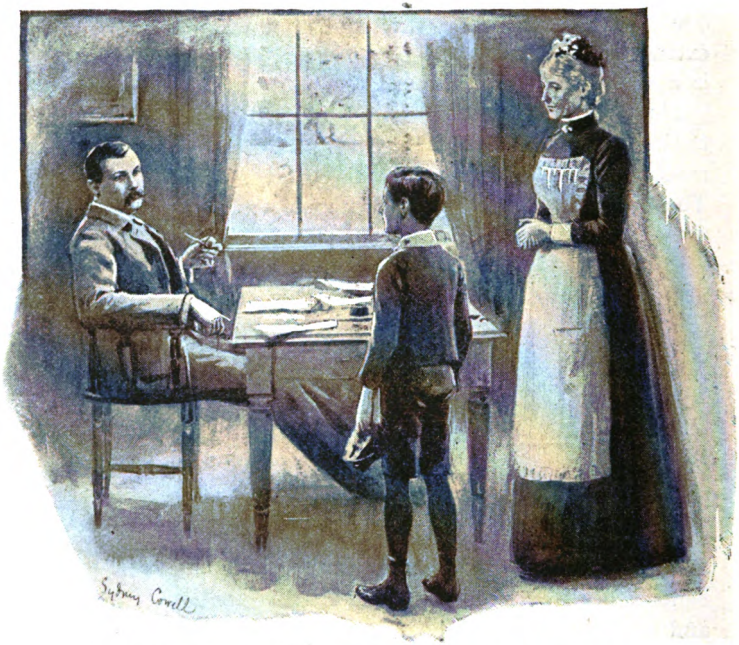
lukewarm praise sent straight to my own address would have been of greater use to me. After ten years of such work I was as unknown as if I had never dipped a pen in an ink-bottle. Sometimes, of course, the anonymous system may screen you from blame as well as rob you of praise. How well I can see a dear old friend running after me in the street, waving a London evening paper in his hand. "Have you seen what they say about your *Cornhill* story?" he shouted. "No, no. What is it?" "Here it is! Here it is!" Eagerly he turned over the column, while I, trembling with excitement, but determined to bear my honours meekly, peeped over his shoulder. "The *Cornhill* this month," said the critic, "has a story in it which would have made Thackeray turn in his grave." There were several witnesses about, and the Portsmouth bench are severe upon assaults, so my friend escaped unscathed. Then first I realised that British criticism had fallen into a shocking state of decay, though when someone has a pat on the back for you you understand that, after all, there are some very smart people upon the literary press.

"'HAVE YOU SEEN WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT YOU?'"

And so at last it was brought home to me that a man may put the very best that is in him into magazine work for years and years and reap no benefit from it, save, of course, the inherent benefits of literary practice. So I wrote another of my first books and sent it off to the publishers. Alack and alas for the dreadful thing that happened! The publishers never received it, the post office sent countless blue forms to say that they knew nothing about it, and from that day to this no word has ever been heard of it. Of course it was the best thing I ever wrote. Who ever lost a manuscript that wasn't? But I must in all honesty confess that my shock at its disappearance would be as nothing to my horror if it were suddenly to appear again—in print. If one or two other of my earlier efforts had also been lost in the post my conscience would have been the lighter. This one was called "The Narrative of John Smith," and it was of a personal-social-political complexion. Had it appeared I should have probably awakened to find myself

infamous, for it steered, as I remember it, perilously near to the libellous. However, it was safely lost, and that was the end of another of my first books.

Then I started upon an exceedingly sensational novel, which interested me extremely at the time, though I have never heard that it had the same effect upon anyone else afterwards. I may urge in extenuation of all shortcomings that it was written in the intervals of a busy though ill-paying practice. And a man must try that and combine it with literary work before he quite knows



"'MRS. THURSTON'S LITTLE BOY WANTS TO SEE YOU, DOCTOR.'"

what it means. How often have I rejoiced to find a clear morning before me, and settled down to my task, or rather, dashed ferociously at it, as knowing how precious were those hours of quiet. Then to me enter my housekeeper, with tidings of dismay. "Mrs. Thurston's little boy wants to see you, doctor." "Show him in," say I, striving to fix my scene in my mind that I may splice it when this trouble is over. "Well, my boy?" "Please, doctor, mother wants to know if she is to add water to that medicine.' "Certainly, certainly." Not that it matters in the least,

but it is well to answer with decision. Exit the little boy, and the splice is about half accomplished when he suddenly bursts into the room again. "Please, doctor, when I got back mother had taken the medicine without the water." "Tut, tut!" I answer. "It really does not matter in the least." The youth withdraws with a suspicious glance, and one more paragraph has been written when the husband puts in an appearance. "There seems to have been some misunderstanding about that medicine," he remarks coldly. "Not at all," I say, "it really didn't matter." "Well, then, why did you tell the boy that it should be taken with water." And then I try to disentangle the business, and the husband shakes his head gloomily at me. "She feels very queer," says he; "we should all be easier in our minds if you came and looked at her." So I leave my heroine in the four-foot way with an express thundering towards her, and trudge sadly off, with the feeling that another morning has been wasted, and another seam left visible to the critic's eye in my unhappy novel. Such was the genesis of my sensational romance, and when publishers wrote to say that they could see no merit in it, I was, heart and soul, of the same way of thinking.

And then, under more favourable circumstances, I wrote "Micah Clarke," for patients had become more tractable, and I had married, and in every way I was a brighter man. A year's reading and five months' writing finished it, and I thought I had a tool in my hands that would cut a path for me. So I had, but the first thing that I cut with it was my finger. I sent it to a friend, whose opinion I deeply respected, in London, who read for one of the leading houses, but he had been bitten by the historical novel, and very naturally he distrusted it. From him it went to house after house, and house after house would have none of it. Blackwood found that the people did not talk so in the seventeenth century; Bentley that its principal defect was that there was a complete absence of interest; Cassells that experience had shown that a historical novel could never be a commercial success. I remember smoking over my dog-eared manuscript when it returned for a whiff of country air after one of its descents upon town, and wondering what I should do if some sporting, reckless kind of publisher were suddenly to stride in and make me a bid of forty shillings or so for the lot. And then suddenly I bethought me to send it to Messrs. Longman's, where it was fortunate enough to fall into the hands of Mr. Andrew Lang. From that day the way was smoothed to it, and, as things turned out, I was spared that

keenest sting of ill-success, that those who had believed in your work should suffer pecuniarily for their belief. A door had been opened for me into the temple of the Muses, and it only remained that I should find something that was worthy of being borne through it.

MR. ANDREW LANG.

A Little Misunderstanding.

By Allen Upward.

Illustrations by G. G. Fraser.

"Like—but oh! how different!"
—*Wordsworth*, "Poems of the Imagination XXIX."

I SIMPLY say that it strikes me as curious. I say no more. I am not conversant with the ways of insurance offices, and I daresay that, to one who was, there would have been nothing strange about it. I make no charge of any kind against the *Circumstantial Preferential Insurance Company*—no charge whatever. I particularly wish this understood, because words have passed between high officials of that company and myself

"I WAS RECEIVED IN SEMI-STATE."

which should not have passed. Other things passed, office furniture passed, but I desire to be magnanimous, and therefore I will not say what I think about that office. I will simply remark that it was unfortunate that things should have turned out as they did.

The first overture came from them. In justice to myself I must record this. Their Directors wrote to me informing me that they had an annual income of about £17,000,000 2s. 1d., that

their yearly bonuses amounted to £18,000,000 os. 11d., and that their total amount insured was several billions. Along with these arithmetical fireworks they enclosed their table of rates, and added that they made special arrangements with professional parachutists and members of the Salvation Army, and granted annuities on advantageous terms. I saw that the Directors consisted of a duke, an actor, several marquises, and members of Parliament and officers in the army without number. It was not for me to suppose that such men could be capable of guile. On the contrary, I was touched and flattered by their evident anxiety to please, and I acknowledged their communication in person that very day.

The shrine in which these distinguished personages carried on their business was a fairy palace, blending the varied beauties of the New Law Courts, the Parthenon of Athens, and the Eiffel Tower. I approached it by a flight of marble steps (which did not impress me as so numerous and precipitous then as at a subsequent stage). On the summit I was received in semi-state by an office boy richly attired in upwards of fifty electro buttons, who marshalled me through a glass door into the luxurious apartment of the General Manager. There were no marquises present just then, but the General Manager received me with *empressement*.

UI FOUR OR FIVE FLIGHTS OF STAIRS."

I came to the point straight off. I said:

"I got your circular this morning, and I came on here at once, so as to lose no time in taking out——"

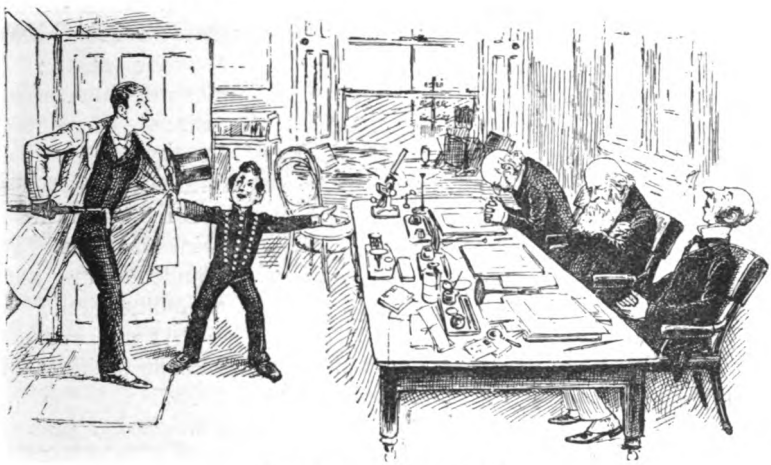
He pulled out his Waterbury and interrupted me.

"You have come in the nick of time," he said. "Our Medical Board would have risen in another five minutes, but if you hurry up at once you will just catch them, and they can examine you now."

The electro-buttoned page—a remarkably agile boy—then rushed me at break-neck speed up four or five flights of stairs, and dragged me panting into the presence of the Board. There were three of them, sitting in a row at a long table, with blotting-pads and things in front of them. They didn't seem to have been writing

much that day, because the blotting-pads were quite clean, and their eyes were closed in meditation when I burst in upon them. But they brightened up as I came in, and all three dipped their pens in the ink as they motioned me to a seat on the opposite side of the table.

Then the President, who had a long white beard, and that far-away, rock-me-to-sleep-mother look in his eyes that you see in great scientists, asked me my name and address, and they all solemnly took it down.



"THEIR EYES WERE CLOSED.'

"Your age?" was the next question.

"Fifty," I answered promptly.

They all lifted their eyebrows and exchanged glances.

"Dear me! You don't look it!" said the one on the left, who wore spectacles, and seemed disposed to be friendly. "I should have taken you for thirty at the outside."

"Appearances are deceptive," I retorted; "I *feel* seventy."

They seemed to be impressed, and took down my words. Then they asked me for the names and addresses of my medical attendant and of two personal friends. That last part seemed familiar somehow. It reminded me of other scenes in my youth.

Then they all three got up and came round to me, and prodded me with wooden things, and made me sit up, and lie down, and stand on my head, and cough, and sneeze, and choke, and perform generally. They didn't say much, but they seemed pretty pleased, judging by the way they smiled at each other and rubbed their

hands. I think they must have found me healthier than they expected. Finally, they went back to their seats again, and wrote down the results.

At last the President looked up and said, encouragingly:

"Now, sir, there are just a few questions which we must put to you for form's sake."

"Don't mention it," I said.

"At the same time," added the one on the right, who wore an eyeglass and looked stern, "you must bear in mind that any want of candour on your part—for instance, in suppressing facts which tell against your health—may have very serious consequences, at your death; I mean earthly consequences, of course. Your policy may be forfeited."

"WORE AN EYEGLASS AND LOOKED STERN."

I was a little pained at this. It sounded almost like an insinuation.

"I will suppress nothing," I said firmly. "Candour is the immediate jewel of my soul. You shall find me candid to a fault."

"Well," resumed the President, "in the first place, I take it you have been vaccinated?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. I don't remember ever being."

The three doctors looked up, and looked at each other in a curious way, as if they were surprised at something. The friendly one said:

"You seemed to have the marks on your arm."

The stern one frowned at him for saying this. I hastened to reply:

"I believe those marks were caused by a bite—by the bite of a mad dog—when I was an infant."

They seemed a little taken aback by that, and the friendly one sighed distinctly. But they soon got over it, and the stern one remarked complacently:

"Very good. His answer is that he has not been vaccinated, so far as he knows; and that he has been bitten by a mad dog. It is a frank and manly explanation, and we must take it down."

They all solemnly wrote it out. Then the President, with an amount of embarrassment which I could not account for, put this question:

"A—are you—a—always strictly sober and temperate?"

"No," I said; "far from it. I drink a good deal too much. Not in public, you know—I daresay those men whose names I've given you never saw me intoxicated. But I drink at home by myself, steadily, night after night. You would be surprised to see how much brandy one can get through in an evening, taking it quietly like that."

"Ah!" They all drew their breath hard, and gazed at me as if there were something about me which they were unused to. Then they bent over their blotting-pads again, and wrote down every syllable.

"THEY ALL DREW THEIR BREATH HARD."

When they had got that down, the President looked up at me, and asked in a curiously hesitating manner if I suffered from any chronic maladies.

I said yes, that I had influenza every winter, and that the last time it was so severe that the doctor gave me up. I saw a pained and puzzled look come on the face of the friendly one as I spoke, but the others seemed quite pleased, and the stern one gave me an approving nod.

Thus encouraged, I went on with a general sketch of my state of health. I said I had always been a valetudinarian, that my liver was permanently deranged, that my lungs were extremely delicate, and that I made them worse by my carelessness in the matter of sitting about in damp things. I said that rheumatism was growing upon me, and I fancied symptoms of gout had lately shown themselves. I told them various other things, and they heard in silence and wrote doggedly on, with a wild light in their eyes and a grey ashen pallor creeping over their countenances. They only stopped for a moment to gasp faintly, when I alluded to the dangerous condition of my heart. The friendly one opened his lips as if to make a comment, but the stern one stopped him.

"Take that down!" he muttered hoarsely. And they nerved themselves for a fresh effort, and went on writing.

"I also think I have a tendency to epilepsy," I added, as soon as they were more composed. "I sometimes faint after a full meal. My doctor says I eat more than is good for me."

"Ah-h!"

Their breathing became stertorous as their pens flew over the paper. I continued my dictation. I told them I had suffered occasionally from leprosy, that I was peculiarly subject to cholera, that I was afflicted with chronic malarial fever, and had lately developed symptoms of glanders; and they wrote it all down.

"THEIR BREATHING BECAME STERTOROUS."

At the end they raised their heads, and I noticed the strange transformation in their faces that comes when men have passed through some experience which has prematurely aged them, and made them realise the hollowness of life's fleeting joys. After a solemn pause, the President said, in dry, tearless accents:

"Thank you. You have now told us everything about yourself; at least, if there is anything more we do not care to know it. To come to your relations—is your father alive?"

"No; he died young."

"Ah! What of?"

"Consumption. It runs in our family. His father died of it, and so did two of my sisters."

They shivered visibly as I said this, and the friendly one took it down with evident reluctance. But the stern one never blenched, though his hair was turning grey before my eyes.

"And your mother?" put in the President, as soon as he could master his voice.

"Paralysis," I answered promptly.

"Do you mean that she is paralytic now, or——"

"No, no. Dead."

"Ah! Did she live to a pretty good age?" I noticed a curious, beseeching ring in the tone with which he asked this.

"No, she died young. Her family always die young."

"Ah-h!" Again there was the spasmodic effort to breathe, and their hands shook so that they could scarcely write. The President seemed too much overcome by something to carry on

the examination · but the stern one manfully stepped into the breach.

"Any other brothers and sisters?" he faltered.

"Yes, four. Three brothers and one sister."

"Ah!" He hesitated some time, apparently struggling with some emotion, before he could frame the next question.

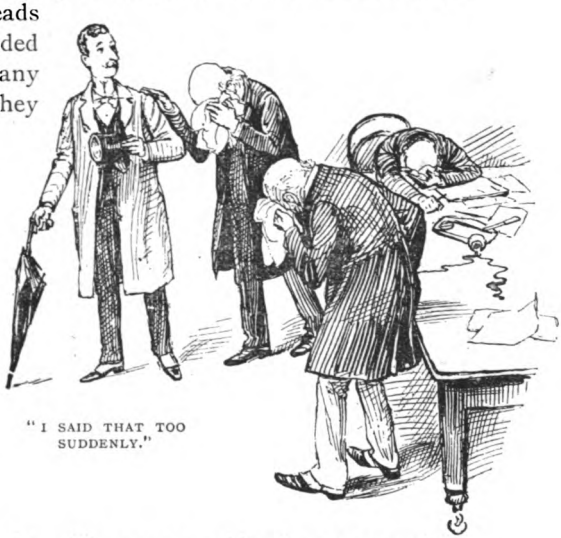
"Any alive?"

"No; all dead," I answered firmly. "All my relatives are dead." Then, anticipating the next question, I added, "They died young."

I saw him wither and droop at this, and for some minutes they all three sat with bowed heads murmuring what sounded like passages from the Litany to themselves. At last, they made a great effort and took up their pens again.

"What of?" came in a sepulchral voice from the stern one.

"The three brothers died of apoplexy," I began, when a weird sound broke from their parched lips like the cry of some dumb thing in pain.



"I SAID THAT TOO SUDDENLY."

"And the sister?"

"Suicide!"

I said that too suddenly. They were evidently not expecting it, and in the state to which they were reduced it might have had serious consequences. As it was, I had some trouble in bringing them round.

As soon as they were sufficiently recovered to recollect what had passed, the friendly one said:

"Well, at any rate, suicide is not hereditary?"

The stern one made a faint gesture of reproval. But I at once corrected him:

"Pardon me, it *is* hereditary in our family. My great-grandfather and two of my great-uncles died of it. It is the result of insanity."

I was quite taken aback by the effect of this last remark. The

terrible tension seemed to give way all at once in a rush. The friendly one was the first to be overcome by his feelings, and no sooner did he put his handkerchief to his eyes than the President broke down too, and finally the iron stoicism of the stern one melted in a flood of scalding tears, and he, too, sobbed aloud.

After some time their grief began to exhaust itself, and then, solemnly rising from their seats, they led me to the door, and said:

"HE SMILED."

"Farewell, sweet youth! It is well that our task is completed, we could have endured no more. Your candour is too great for this world. It has been too much for us. After the atmosphere of deceit to which we have been accustomed so long, the change to truthfulness like yours has been too sudden and severe, and it has broken our hearts. Go, childlike stranger, but take with you three old men's blessing. We feel, we hope, we are not likely to meet you again. We have done our duty this day, but the shock has been too great for us, and doubtless we shall soon find oblivion in the tomb. But we do not mind that. We would rather die than live through another hour like this. Farewell! We shall hand in our report (together with our resignation) to the Directors before we go, and you will hear the result—if still alive—in a day or two."

I came away, hardly knowing whether to feel flattered or grieved, and two days after I got this letter:—

Circumstantial Preferential Insurance Co.,
St. Swindlem's Lane, E.C.

Dear Sir,—The Directors have carefully considered the report of their Medical Board in your case. While not prepared to absolutely refuse your proposal, they feel bound, in the light of the information furnished by you to the Board, to make the condition that your age shall be treated as 96.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) W. B. CHOWSUM,
Gen. Manager.

P.S.—I would draw your particular attention to the clause inserted in all our policies making them void in cases of suicide.

As soon as I read that letter I saw that a mistake had been made. Acting with that frankness which the Medical Board had not been slow to recognise, I at once proceeded to the office, and saw the General Manager. I said:

"I am in receipt of your favour, and I agree to have my age treated as 96."

He smiled and rubbed his hands.

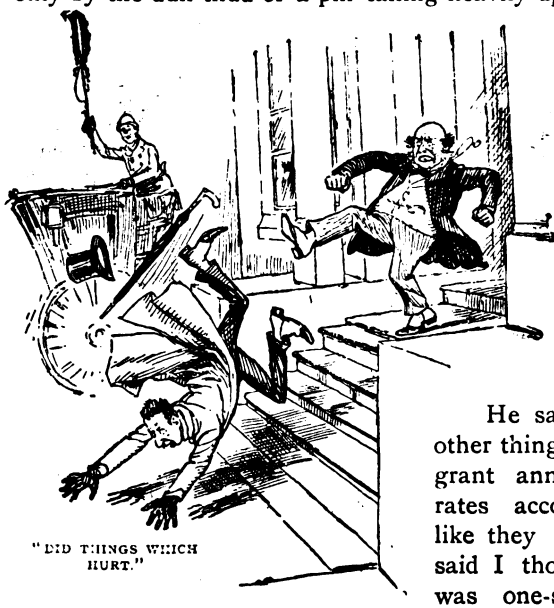
"Yes," I said, "personally I might have suggested 100 as fairer, but still I am quite willing to make it 96."

"Ah-h!" He started a little, and I noticed the same curious expression coming into his eyes that I had seen in the Medical Board.

"Yes," I went on, "but there is one point on which you seem to have fallen into a little error. I fancy you think I want to insure my life. The fact is I want to buy an annuity of £1,000. I see by your prospectus that at the age agreed on it will cost me just £1,500."

I was right. There had been a mistake. That General Manager was the most awful spectacle I have ever looked upon in my life. His whole face became blackened and distorted like that of a fiend, and froth issued from his lips.

For full five minutes there was a freezing silence, broken only by the dull thud of a pin falling heavily upon the carpet.



"DID THINGS WHICH HURT."

I thought at first he had fainted. It would have been far better for his own sake if he had. If that General Manager is a Christian he will carry remorse to his grave for the observations he addressed to me on that occasion.

He said, among many other things, that they didn't grant annuities at different rates according to health, like they insured lives. I said I thought that system was one-sided, and that *insurance* was not the best way for his office to spell its name. Then he said things which hurt my feelings, and did things which hurt other parts of me, and, finally, he escorted me to the edge of the steps, and I went home in a cab.

To me it was disappointing and bewildering. It seemed as if what was sauce for the insured ought to have been sauce for the annuitant. But, as I have said, I am a child in such matters, and possibly one more versed in them would have seen nothing out of the way in what occurred.

"IN THE INTERESTS OF SCIENCE."

Novel Notes.

By Jerome K. Jerome.

Illustrations by J. Gülich.

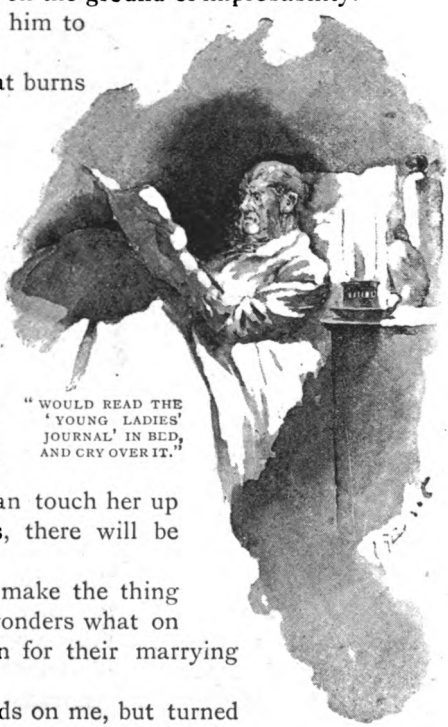
IX.

THE discussion arose in this way. I had proposed a match between our villain and the daughter of the local chemist, a singularly noble and pure-minded girl, the humble but worthy friend of the heroine.

Brown had refused his consent on the ground of improbability. "What in thunder would induce him to marry *her?*" he asked.

"Love!" I replied; "love, that burns as brightly in the meanest villain's breast as in the proud heart of the good young man."

"Are you trying to be light and amusing," returned Brown, severely, "or are you supposed to be discussing the matter seriously? What attraction could such a girl have for such a man as Reuben Neil?"



"WOULD READ THE 'YOUNG LADIES' JOURNAL' IN BED, AND CRY OVER IT."

"Every attraction," I retorted. "She is the exact moral contrast to himself. She is beautiful (if she's not beautiful enough, we can touch her up a bit), and, when the father dies, there will be the shop."

"Besides," I added, "it will make the thing seem more natural if everybody wonders what on earth could have been the reason for their marrying each other."

Brown wasted no further words on me, but turned to MacShaugnassy.

"Can *you* imagine our friend Reuben seized with a burning desire to marry Mary Holme?" he asked with a smile.

"Of course I can," said MacShaugnassy; "I can imagine anything, and believe anything of anybody. It is only in novels that people act reasonably and in accordance with what might be expected of them. I knew an old sea-captain who used to read

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the *Young Ladies' Journal* in bed, and cry over it. I knew a bootmaker who always carried Browning's poems about with him in his pocket to study in the train. I have known a Harley Street doctor to develop at forty-eight a sudden and overmastering passion for switchbacks, and to spend every hour he could spare from his practice at one or other of the exhibitions, having three-pen'orths one after the other. I have known a book-reviewer give oranges (not poisoned ones) to children. A man is not a character, he is a dozen characters, one of them prominent, the other eleven more or less undeveloped. I knew a man once, two of whose characters were of equal value, and the consequences were peculiar."

"THE MOST SUPERIOR PERSON."

We begged him to relate the case to us, and he did so.

"He was a Balliol man," said MacShaugnassy, "and his Christian name was Joseph. He was a member of the 'Devonshire' at the time I knew him, and was, I think, the most superior person I have ever met. He sneered at the *Saturday Review* as the pet journal of the suburban literary club; and at the *Athenæum* as the trade organ of the unsuccessful writer. The difference between *Punch* and *Ally Sloper* he held to be twopence. Thackeray, he considered, was fairly entitled to his position of favourite author to the cultured clerk; and Carlyle he regarded as the exponent of the earnest artisan. Living authors he never read, but this did not prevent his criticising them contemptuously. The only inhabitants of the nineteenth century that he ever praised were a few obscure French novelists, of whom nobody but himself had ever heard. He had his own opinion about God Almighty, and objected to Heaven on account of the strong Clapham contingent likely to be found in residence there. Humour made him sad and sentiment made him ill. Art irritated him and science bored him. He despised his own family and disliked everybody else. For exercise he yawned, and his conversation was mainly confined to an occasional shrug.

"Nobody liked him, but everybody respected him. One felt grateful to him for his condescension in living at all.

"One summer, I was fishing over the Norfolk Broads, and on the Bank Holiday, thinking I would like to see the London 'Arry in his glory, I ran over to Yarmouth. Walking along the sea-front in the evening, I suddenly found myself confronted by four remarkably choice specimens of the class. They were urging on their wild and erratic career arm-in-arm. The one nearest the road was playing an unusually wheezy concertina, and the other three were bawling out the chorus of a music-hall song, the heroine of which appeared to be Emma.

"They spread themselves right across the pavement, compelling all the women and children they met to step into the road-way. I stood my ground on the kerb, and as they brushed by me something in the face of the one with the concertina struck me as familiar.

"THEY SPREAD THEMSELVES RIGHT ACROSS THE PAVEMENT."

"I turned and followed them. They were evidently enjoying themselves immensely. To every girl they passed they yelled out, 'Oh, you little jam tart!' and every old lady they addressed as 'Mar.' The noisiest and the vulgarest of the four was the one with the concertina.

"I followed them on to the pier, and then, hurrying past them, I waited for them under a gas-lamp. When the man with the concertina came into the light and I saw him clearly I started. From the face I could have sworn it was Joseph; but everything else about him rendered such an assumption impossible. Putting aside the time and the place, and forgetting his behaviour, his companions, and his instrument, what remained was sufficient to make the suggestion absurd. Joseph was always clean shaven; this youth had a smudgy moustache and a pair of incipient red whiskers. He was dressed in the loudest check suit I have ever seen off the stage. He wore patent leather boots with mother-of-pearl buttons, and a necktie that in an earlier age would have called down lightning out of Heaven. He had a low-crowned billycock hat on his head, and a big evil-smelling cigar between his lips.

"Argue as I would, however, the face was the face of Joseph; and, moved by a curiosity I could not control, I kept near him, watching him.

"Once, for a little while, I missed him; but there was not much fear of losing that suit for long, and after a little looking about I struck it again. He was sitting at the end of the pier, where it was less crowded, with his arm round a girl's waist. I crept close. She was a jolly, red-faced girl, good-looking enough, but common to the last degree. Her hat lay on the seat beside her, and her head was resting on his shoulder. She appeared to be undoubtedly fond of him, but he was evidently bored and disgusted.

"HE WAS EVIDENTLY BORED."

"'Don'tcher like me, Joe?' I heard her murmur.

"'Yeas,' he replied, somewhat unconvincingly as it seemed to me, 'o' course I likes yer.'

"She gave him an affectionate slap, but he did not respond, and a few minutes afterwards, muttering some excuse, he rose and left her, and I followed him as he made his way towards the refreshment room. At the door he met one of his pals.

"'Hullo!' was the question, 'wot 'a yer done wi' 'Liza?'

"'Oh, I carn't stand 'er,' was his reply; 'she gives me the bloomin' 'ump. You 'ave a turn with 'er.'

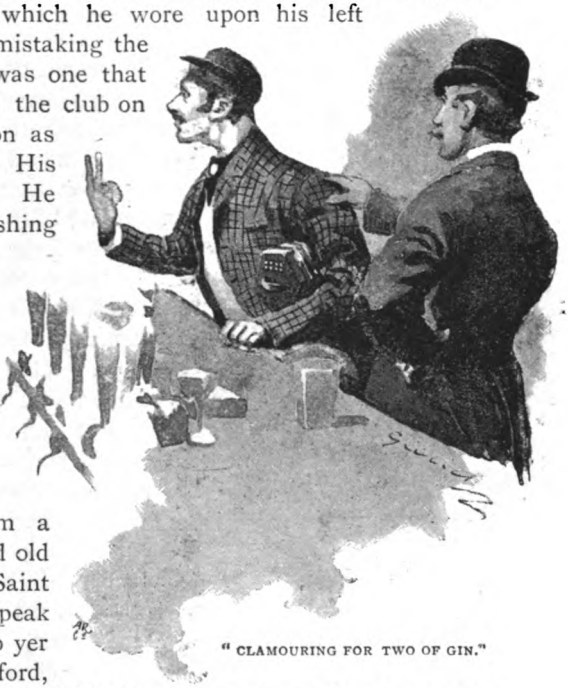
"His friend disappeared in the direction of 'Liza, and Joe pushed into the room, I keeping close behind him. Now that he was alone I was determined to speak to him. The longer I had studied his features the more resemblance I had found in them to those of my superior friend Joseph.

"He was leaning across the bar, clamouring for two of gin, when I tapped him on the shoulder. He turned his head, and the moment he saw me, his face went livid.

"'Mr. Joseph Smythe, I believe,' I said with a smile.

"'Who's Mr. Joseph Smythe?' he answered hoarsely; 'my name's Smith, I ain't no bloomin' Smythe. Who are you? I don't know yer.'

"As he spoke, my eyes rested upon a curious gold ring of Indian workmanship which he wore upon his left hand. There was no mistaking the ring, at all events, it was one that had been passed round the club on more than one occasion as a unique curiosity. His eyes followed my gaze. He burst into tears, and pushing me before him into a quiet corner of the saloon, sat down facing me.



"CLAMOURING FOR TWO OF GIN."

"'Don't give me away, old man,' he whimpered; 'for Gawd's sake, don't let on to any of the chaps 'ere that I'm a member of that blessed old waxwork show in Saint James's, they'd never speak to me agen. And keep yer mug shut about Oxford, there's a good sort. I wouldn't 'ave 'em know as 'ow I was one o' them college blokes for anythink.'

"I sat aghast. I had listened to hear him entreat me to keep 'Smith,' the rorty 'Arry, a secret from the acquaintances of 'Smythe,' the superior person. Here was 'Smith' in mortal terror lest his pals should hear of his identity with the aristocratic 'Smythe,' and discard him. His attitude puzzled me at the time, but, when I came to reflect, my wonder was at myself for having expected the opposite.

"'I carn't 'elp it,' he went on; 'I 'ave to live two lives. 'Alf my time I'm a stuck-up prig, as orter be jolly well kicked——'

"'At which times,' I interrupted, 'I have heard you express some extremely uncomplimentary opinions concerning 'Arries.'

"'I know,' he replied, in a voice betraying strong emotion; 'that's where it's so precious rough on me. When I'm a toff I despises myself, 'cos I knows that underneath my sneering phiz I'm a bloomin' 'Arry. When I'm an 'Arry, I 'ates myself 'cos I knows I'm a toff.'

"'Can't you decide which character you prefer, and stick to it?' I asked.

"PLAYING SENTIMENTAL AIRS TO HIMSELF."

"'No,' he answered, 'I carn't. It's a rum thing, but whichever I am, sure as fate, 'bout the end of a month I begin to get sick o' myself.'

"'I can quite understand it,' I murmured; 'I should give way myself in a fortnight.'

"'I've been myself, now,' he continued, without noticing my remark, 'for somethin' like ten days. One mornin', in 'bout three weeks' time, I shall get up in my diggins in the Mile End Road, and I shall look round the room, and at these clothes angin' over the bed, and at this yer concertina' (he gave it an affectionate squeeze), 'and I shall feel myself gettin' scarlet all over. Then I shall jump out o' bed, and look at myself in the glass. "You howling little cad," I shall say to myself, "I have half a mind to strangle you;" and I shall shave myself, and put on a quiet blue serge suit and a bowler 'at, tell my landlady to keep my rooms for me till I comes back, slip out o' the 'ouse, and into the fust 'ansom I meets, and back to the Halbany. And a month arter that, I shall come into my chambers at the Halbany, fling Voltaire and Parini into the fire, shy me 'at at the bust of good old 'Omer, slip on my blue suit agen, and back to the Mile End Road.'

"'How do you explain your absence to both parties?' I asked.

"'Oh, that's simple enough,' he replied. 'I just tells my 'ousekeeper at the Halbany as I'm goin' on the Continong; and my mates 'ere thinks I'm a traveller.'

"'Nobody misses me much,' he added, pathetically; 'I hain't a partic'larly fetchin' sort o' bloke, either of me. I'm sich an out-and-outer. When I'm an 'Arry, I'm too much of an 'Arry, and when I'm a prig, I'm a reg'lar fust prize prig. Seems to me as if I was two ends of a man without any middle. If I could only mix myself up a bit more, I'd be all right.'

"He sniffed once or twice, and then he laughed. 'Ah, well,' he said, casting aside his momentary gloom; 'it's all a game, and wot's the odds so long as yer 'appy. 'Ave a wet?'

"I declined the 'wet,' and left him playing sentimental airs to himself upon the concertina.

"One afternoon, about a month later, the servant came to me with a card on which was engraved the name of 'Mr. Joseph Smythe.' I requested her to show him up. He entered with his usual air of languid superciliousness, and seated himself in a graceful attitude upon the sofa.

"'Well,' I said, as soon as the girl had closed the door behind her, 'so you've got rid of Smith?'

"A sickly smile passed over his face. 'You have not mentioned it to anyone?' he asked anxiously.

"'Not to a soul,' I replied; 'though I confess I often feel tempted to.'

"'I sincerely trust you never will,' he said, in a tone of alarm. 'You can have no conception of the misery the whole thing causes me. I cannot understand it. What possible affinity there can be between myself and that disgusting little snob passes my comprehension. I assure you, my dear Mac, the knowledge that I was a ghoul, or a vampire, would cause me less nausea than the reflection that I am one and the same with that odious little Whitechapel bounder. When I think of him every nerve in my body——'

"'Don't think about him any more,' I interrupted, perceiving his strongly-suppressed emotion. 'You didn't come here to talk about him, I'm sure. Let us dismiss him.'

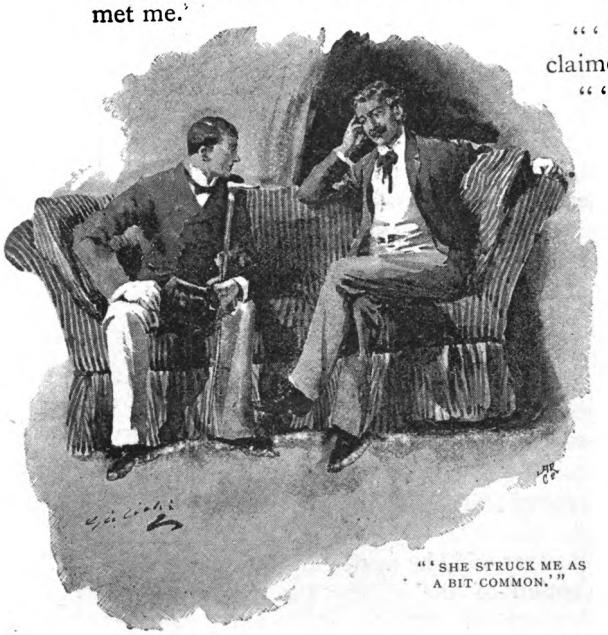
"'Well,' he replied, 'in a certain roundabout way it is slightly connected with him. That is really my excuse for inflicting the subject upon you. You are the only man I *can* speak to about it—if I shall not bore you?'

"'Not in the least,' I said. 'I am most interested.' As he still hesitated, I asked him pointblank what it was.

"He appeared embarrassed. 'It is really very absurd of me,' he said, while the faintest suspicion of pink crossed his usually colourless face; 'but I feel I must talk to somebody about it. The fact is, my dear Mac, I am in love.'

"'Capital!' I cried; 'I'm delighted to hear it.' (I thought it might make a man of him.) 'Do I know the lady?'

"'I am inclined to think you must have seen her,' he replied; 'she was with me on the pier at Yarmouth that evening you met me.'



"'SHE STRUCK ME AS A BIT COMMON.'"

"'Not 'Liza!' I exclaimed.

"'That was she,' he answered; 'Miss Elizabeth Muggins.' He dwelt lovingly upon the name.

"'But,' I said, 'you seemed — I really could not help noticing, it was so pronounced — you seemed to positively dislike her. Indeed, I gathered from your remark to a friend that her society was distinctly distasteful to you.'

"'To Smith,' he corrected me. 'What judge would that howling little blackguard be of a woman's worth! The dislike of such a man as that is a testimonial to her merit!'

"'I may be mistaken,' I said; 'but she struck me as a bit common.'

"'She is not, perhaps, what the world would call a lady,' he admitted; 'but then, my dear Mac, my opinion of the world is not such as to render *its* opinion of much value to me. I and the world differ on most subjects, I am glad to say. She is beautiful, and she is good, and she is my choice.'

"'She's a jolly enough little girl,' I replied, 'and, I should say, affectionate; but have you considered, Smythe, whether she is quite—what shall we say—quite as intellectual as could be desired?'

"'Really, to tell the truth, I have not troubled myself much about her intellect,' he replied, with one of his sneering smiles. 'I

have no doubt that the amount of intellect absolutely necessary to the formation of a British home, I shall be able to supply myself. I have no desire for an intellectual wife. One is compelled to meet tiresome people, but one does not live with them if one can avoid it.'

"'No,' he continued, reverting to his more natural tones; "the more I think of Elizabeth the more clear it becomes to me that she is the one woman in the world for whom marriage with me is possible. I perceive that to the superficial observer my selection must appear extraordinary. I do not pretend to explain it, or even to understand it. The study of mankind is beyond man. Only fools attempt it. Maybe it is her contrast to myself that attracts me. Maybe my, perhaps, too spiritual nature feels the need of contact with her coarser clay to perfect itself. I cannot tell. These things must always remain mysteries. I only know that I love her—that, if any reliance is to be placed upon instinct, she is the mate to whom Artemis is leading me.'

"'I CAME ACROSS HER IN AN AERATED BREAD SHOP."

"It was clear that he was in love, and I therefore ceased to argue with him. 'You kept up your acquaintanceship with her, then, after you'—I was going to say 'after you ceased to be Smith,' but not wishing to agitate him by more mention of that person than I could help, I substituted, 'after you returned to the Albany.'

"'Not exactly,' he replied; 'I lost sight of her after I left Yarmouth, and I did not see her again until five days ago, when I came across her in an aerated bread shop. I had gone in to get a glass of milk and a bun, and *she* brought them to me. I recog-

nised her in a moment.' His face lighted up with quite a human smile. 'I take tea there every afternoon now,' he added, glancing towards the clock, 'at four.'

"'There's not much need to ask *her* views on the subject,' I said, laughing; 'her feelings towards you were pretty evident.'

"'Well, that is the curious part of it,' he replied, with a return to his former embarrassment; 'she does not seem to care for me now at all. Indeed, she positively refuses me. She says—to put it in the dear child's own racy language—that she wouldn't take me on at any price. She says it would be like marrying a clockwork figure without the key. She's more frank than complimentary, but I like that.'

"'Wait a minute,' I said; 'an idea occurs to me. Does she know of your identity with Smith?'

"'No,' he replied, alarmed, 'I would not have her know it for worlds. Only yesterday she told me that I reminded her of a fellow she had met at Yarmouth, and my heart was in my mouth.'

"'How did she look when she told you that?' I asked.

"'How did she look?' he repeated, not understanding me.

"'What was her expression at that moment?' I said—'was it severe or tender?'

"'Well,' he replied, 'now I come to think of it, she did seem to soften a bit just then.'

"'My dear boy,' I said, 'the case is as clear as daylight. She loves Smith. No girl who admired Smith could be attracted by Smythe. As your present self you will never win her. In a few weeks' time, however, you will be Smith. Leave the matter over until then. Propose to her as Smith, and she will accept you. After marriage you can break Smythe gently to her.'

"'By Jove!' he exclaimed, startled out of his customary lethargy, 'I never thought of that. The truth is, when I am in my right senses, Smith and all his affairs seem like a dream to me. Any idea connected with him would never enter my mind.'

"He rose and held out his hand. 'I am so glad I came to see you,' he said; 'your suggestion has almost reconciled me to my miserable fate. Indeed, I quite look forward to a month of Smith, now.'

"'I'm so pleased,' I answered, shaking hands with him. 'Mind you come and tell me how you get on. Another man's love affairs are not usually absorbing, but there is an element of interest about yours that renders the case exceptional.'

"We parted, and I did not see him again for another month.

Then, late one evening, the servant knocked at my door to say that a Mr. Smith wished to see me.

"'Smith, Smith,' I repeated; 'what Smith? didn't he give you a card?'

"'No, sir,' answered the girl; 'he doesn't look the sort that would have a card. He's not a gentleman, sir; but he says you'll know him.' She evidently regarded the statement as an aspersion upon myself.

"SAT DOWN AWKWARDLY ON THE EDGE OF A CHAIR."

"I was about to tell her to say I was out, when the recollection of Smythe's other self flashed into my mind, and I directed her to send him up.

"A minute passed, and then he entered. He was wearing a new suit of a louder pattern, if possible, than before. I think he must have designed it himself. He looked hot and greasy. He did not offer to shake hands, but sat down awkwardly on the extreme edge of a small chair, and gaped about the room as if he had never seen it before.

"He communicated his shyness to myself. I could not think what to say, and we sat for a while in painful silence.

"'Well,' I said, at last, plunging head-foremost into the matter, according to the method of shy people, 'and how's 'Liza?'

"'Oh, *she's* all right,' he replied, keeping his eyes fixed on his hat.

"'Have you done it?' I continued.

"'Done wot?' he asked, looking up.

"'Married her.'

"'No,' he answered, returning to the contemplation of his hat.

"'Has she refused you then,' I said.

"'I ain't arst 'er,' he returned.

He seemed unwilling to explain matters of his own accord. I had to put the conversation into the form of a cross-examination.

"'Why not,' I asked; 'don't you think she cares for you any longer?'

He burst into a harsh laugh. 'There ain't much fear o' that,' he said; 'it's like 'aving an Alcock's porous plaster mashed on yer,

blowed if it ain't. There's no gettin' rid of 'er. I wish she'd giv' somebody else a turn. I'm fair sick of 'er.'

"'But you were enthusiastic about her a month ago!' I exclaimed in astonishment.

"'Smythe may 'ave been,' he said; 'there ain't no accounting for that ninny, 'is 'ead's full of starch. Anyhow, I don't take 'er on while I'm myself. I'm too jolly fly.'

"'That sort o' gal's all right enough to lark with,' he continued; 'but yer don't want to marry 'em. They don't do yer no good. A man wants a wife as 'e can respect—someone as is a cut above 'imself, as will raise 'im up a peg or two—someone as 'e can look up to and worship. A man's wife orter be to 'im a gawddess—a hangel, a——'

"'You appear to have met the lady,' I remarked, interrupting him.

"He blushed scarlet, and became suddenly absorbed in the pattern of the carpet. But the next moment he looked up again, and his face seemed literally transformed.

"'Oh! Mr. MacShaugnassy,' he burst out, with a ring of genuine manliness in his voice, 'you don't know 'ow good, 'ow beautiful she is. I ain't fit to breathe 'er name in my thoughts. An' she's so clever. I met 'er at that Toynbee 'All. There was a party of toffs there all together. You would 'ave enjoyed it, Mr. MacShaugnassy, if you could 'ave 'eard 'er; she was makin' fun of the pictures and the people round about to 'er pa—such wit, such learnin', such 'aughtiness. I follered them out and opened the carriage door for 'er, and she just drew 'er skirt aside and looked at me as if I was the dirt in the road. I wish I was, for then perhaps one day I'd kiss 'er feet.'

"His emotion was so genuine that I did not feel inclined to laugh at him. 'Did you find out who she was?' I asked

"'Yes,' he answered; 'I 'eard the old genleman say "'Ome" to the coachman, and I ran after the carriage all the way to 'Arley Street. Trevior's 'er name, Hedith Trevior.'

"'Miss Trevior!' I cried, 'a tall, dark girl, with untidy hair and rather weak eyes?'

"'Tall and dark,' he replied; 'with 'air that seems tryin' to reach 'er lips to kiss 'em, and heyes, light blue, like a Cambridge necktie. A 'undred and seventy-three was the number.'

"'That's right,' I said; 'my dear Smith, this is becoming complicated. You've met the lady and talked to her for half an hour—as Smythe, don't you remember?'

"'No,' he said, after cogitating for a minute, 'carn't say I do, I never can remember much about Smythe. He allers seems to me like a bad dream.'

"'Well, you met her,' I said; 'I'm positive. I introduced you

"'OPENED THE CARRIAGE DOOR FOR 'ER.'"

to her myself, and she confided to me afterwards that she thought you a most charming man.'

"'No—did she?' he remarked, evidently softening in his feelings towards Smythe; 'and did *I* like *'er?*'

"'Well, to tell the truth,' I answered, 'I don't think you did. You looked intensely bored.'

"'The Juggins,' I heard him mutter to himself, and then he said aloud: 'D'yer think I shall get a chance o' seein' 'er agen, when I'm—when I'm Smythe?'

"'Of course,' I said, 'I'll take you round myself. By-the-bye,' I cried, jumping up and looking on the mantelpiece, 'I've got a card for a Cinderella at their place—something to do with a birthday. Will you be Smythe on November the twentieth?'

"'Yeas,' he replied; 'oh, yeas—bound to be by then.'

"'Very well, then,' I said, 'I'll call round for you at the Albany, and we'll go together.'

"He rose and stood smoothing his hat with his sleeve. 'Fust time I've ever looked for'ard to bein' that hanimated corpse, Smythe,' he said slowly. 'Blowed if I don't try to 'urry it up—'pon my sivey I will.'

"I KISS THE DOOR-STEP."

"He'll be no good to you till the twentieth,' I reminded him. 'And,' I added, as I stood up to ring the bell, 'you're sure it's a genuine case this time. You won't be going back to 'Liza?'

"'Oh, don't talk 'bout 'Liza in the same breath with Hedith,' he replied, 'it sounds like sacrilege.'

"He stood hesitating with the handle of the door in his hand. At last, opening it and looking very hard at his hat, he said, 'I'm goin' to 'Arley street now. I walk up and down outside the 'ouse every evening, and sometimes, when there ain't no one lookin', I get a chance to kiss the doorstep.'

"He disappeared, and I returned to my chair.

"On November the twentieth, I called for him according to promise. I found him on the point of starting for the club: he had forgotten all about our appointment. I reminded him of it, and he with difficulty recalled it, and consented, without any enthusiasm, to accompany me. By a few artful hints to her mother (including a casual mention of his income), I manœuvred matters so that he had Edith almost entirely to himself for the whole evening. I was proud of what I had done, and as we were walking home together I waited to receive his gratitude.

"As it seemed slow in coming, I hinted my expectations.

"'Well,' I said, 'I think I managed that very cleverly for you.'

"'Managed what very cleverly?' said he.

"'Why getting you and Miss Trevior left together for such a long time in the conservatory,' I answered, somewhat hurt; '*I* fixed that for you.'

"'Oh, it was *you*, was it,' he replied; 'I've been cursing Providence.'

"I stopped dead in the middle of the pavement, and faced him. 'Don't you love her?' I said.

"'Love her!' he repeated, in the utmost astonishment; 'what on earth is there in her to love? She's nothing but a bad translation of a modern French comedy, with the interest omitted.'

"This 'tired' me—to use an Americanism. 'You came to me a month ago,' I said, 'raving over her, and talking about being the dirt under her feet and kissing her doorstep.'

"'WHAT ON EARTH IS THERE IN HER TO LOVE?'"

"He turned very red. 'I wish, my dear Mac,' he said, 'you would pay me the compliment of not mistaking me for that detestable little cad with whom I have the misfortune to be connected. You would greatly oblige me if next time he attempts to inflict upon you his vulgar drivel you would kindly kick him downstairs.'

"'No doubt,' he added, with a sneer, as we walked on, 'Miss Trevior would be his ideal. She is exactly the type of woman, I should say, to charm that type of man. For myself, I do not appreciate the artistic and literary female.'

"'Besides,' he continued, in a deeper tone, 'you know my feelings. I shall never care for any other woman but Elizabeth.'

"'And she?' I said——

"'She,' he sighed, 'is breaking her heart for Smith.'

"'Why don't you tell her you are Smith?' I asked.

"'I cannot,' he replied, 'not even to win her. Besides, she would not believe me.'

"We said good-night at the corner of Bond Street, and I did not see him again till one afternoon late in the following March, when I ran against him in Ludgate Circus. He was wearing his transition blue suit and bowler hat. I went up to him and took his arm.

"'Which are you?' I said.

"'Neither, for the moment,' he replied, 'thank God. Half-an-hour ago I was Smythe, half-an-hour hence I shall be Smith. For the present half-hour I am a man.'

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"There was a pleasant, hearty ring in his voice, and a genial, kindly light in his eyes, and he held himself like a frank gentleman.

"'You are certainly an improvement upon both of them,' I said.

"He laughed a sunny laugh, with just the shadow of sadness dashed across it. 'Do you know my idea of Heaven?' he said.

"'No,' I replied, somewhat surprised at the question.

"'Ludgate Circus,' was the answer. 'The only really satisfying moments of my life,' he said, 'have been passed in the neighbourhood of Ludgate Circus. I leave Piccadilly an unhealthy, unwholesome prig. At Charing Cross I begin to feel my blood stir in my veins. From Ludgate Circus to Cheapside I am a human thing with human feeling throbbing in my heart, and human thought throbbing in my brain—with fancies, sympathies, and hopes. At the Bank my mind becomes a blank. As I walk on my senses grow coarse and blunted; and by the time I reach Whitechapel I am a poor little uncivilised cad. On the return journey it is the same thing reversed.'

"'AT THE BANK MY MIND BECOMES A BLANK.'"

"'Why not live in Ludgate Circus,' I said, 'and be always as you are now?'

"'Because,' he answered, 'man is a pendulum, and must travel his arc.'

"'My dear Mac,' he said, laying his hand upon my shoulder, 'there is only one good thing about me, and that is a moral. Man is as God made him: don't be so sure that you can take him to pieces and improve him. All my life I have sought to make myself an unnaturally superior person. Nature has retaliated by making me also an unnaturally inferior person. Nature abhors lopsidedness. She turns out man as a whole, to be developed as a whole. I always wonder, whenever I come across a supernaturally pious, a supernaturally moral, a supernaturally cultured person, if they also have a reverse self.'

"I was shocked at his suggested argument, and walked by his side for a while without speaking. At last, feeling curious on the subject, I asked him how his various love affairs were progressing.

"SLOUCHING ALONG."

"'Oh, as usual,' he replied; 'in and out of a *cul de sac*. When I am Smythe I love Eliza, and Eliza loathes me. When I am Smith I love Edith, and the mere sight of me makes her shudder. It is as unfortunate for them as for me. I am not saying it boastfully. Heaven knows it is an added draught of misery in my cup; but it is a fact that Eliza is literally pining away for me as Smith, and as Smith I find it impossible to be even civil to her; while Edith, poor girl, has been foolish enough to set her heart on me as Smythe, and as Smythe she seems to me but the skin of a woman stuffed with the husks of learning, and rags torn from the corpse of wit.'

"I remained absorbed in my own thoughts for some time, and did not come out of them till we were crossing the Minories. Then, the idea suddenly occurring to me, I said:

"'Why don't you get a new girl altogether; there must be medium girls that both Smith and Smythe could like, and that would put up with both of you.'

"'No more girls for this child,' he answered; 'they're more trouble than they're worth. Those yer want yer carn't get, and those yer can 'ave, yer don't want.'

"I started, and looked up at him. He was slouching along with his hands in his pockets, and a vacuous look in his face.

"A sudden repulsion seized me. 'I must go now,' I said, stopping. 'I'd no idea I had come so far.'

"He seemed as glad to be rid of me as I to be rid of him. 'Oh, must yer,' he said, holding out his hand. 'Well, so long.'

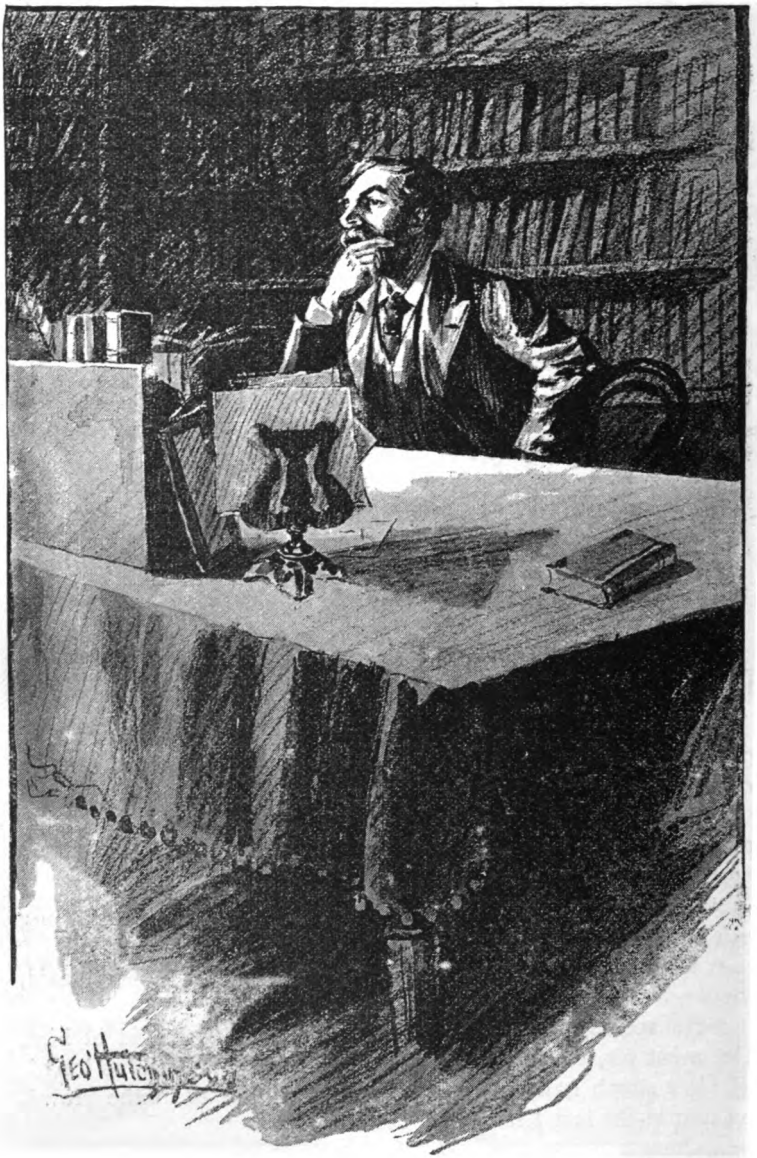
"We shook hands carelessly. He disappeared in the crowd, and that is the last I have ever seen of him."

* * * *

"Is that a true story?" asked Jephson.

"Well, I've altered the names and dates," said MacShaugnassy; but the main facts you can rely upon."

(To be continued.)



JOHN BURNS IN HIS STUDY.

"Lions in Their Dens."

No. I.—JOHN BURNS AT BATTERSEA.

By Raymond Blathwayt.

Illustrations by G. and B. Hutchinson.

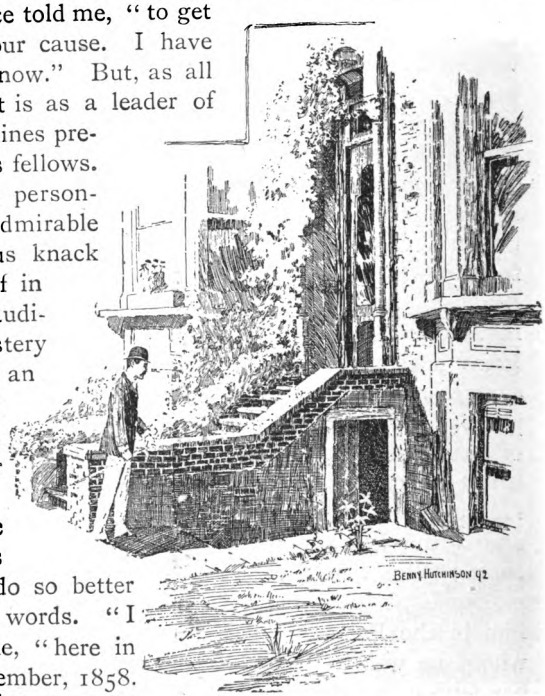
(Photographs by Messrs. Lombardi and C. F. Treble.)

JOHN BURNS carries his better qualities written in his face. It is a charming face, strong, rugged; a face with a history written in deep lines upon it, and withal a handsome, cheery, breezy face. A very dark face, full bearded, clean cut, somewhat coarse grained; dark penetrating eyes, overshadowed by beetling eyebrows; a profusion of thick hair, fast becoming grey, although its wearer is only thirty-three years of age. Something of the Scotchman in his face, for is he not the son of an Ayrshire father and an Aberdonian mother, and does not the blood of the great poet run in his veins? He is energetic in his conversation, and his phraseology smacks at times somewhat of the platform. He is vivid, picturesque, original in his descriptions. He outlines a subject clear and strong, and with vigorous terseness, for the benefit of his listener.

JOHN BURNS AT 18.

He is at home everywhere and with everyone. I have met him in the Palace of the stately Anglo-Roman Cardinal, with whom he was as thoroughly at one as he was on the following day with a number of young artists in a studio in Bohemia. He instructed the Cardinal, he listened to him, he deferred to him, he differed from him, he laughingly triumphed over him; and on the following day he expounded the whole gospel of Art to the young Titians and Leightons by whom he was surrounded, and displayed as he talked an intimate acquaintance with the galleries of the Continent, the works of the old masters, the brilliant achievements of the new. I have seen him on the top of a 'bus fraternising with the driver and the conductor, learning their troubles, advising them best what to do; or seated in the County Council, of which, but for his wonderful disinterestedness, I have

good reason to know he might have been the Vice-chairman, and drawing an income which, to his simple ideas, would have been a veritable fortune. And I have watched him at tennis with his wife on a sunny afternoon in Battersea, or neatly taking the wicket of some skilled batsman, or holding his own with the best in a clever boxing match. As Lord High Executioner in "The Mikado" he is a rival of whom even Gee-Gee himself need not be ashamed, whilst as a singer of comic songs he always brings down the house. "I used to act at amateur entertainments once on a time," he once told me, "to get funds for the labour cause. I have other work to do now." But, as all the world knows, it is as a leader of men that John shines pre-eminent among his fellows. His is a winning personality. With an admirable voice, a marvellous knack of putting himself in accord with his audience, a perfect mastery of his subject, and an indomitable pluck and perseverance, he is a born leader of men.



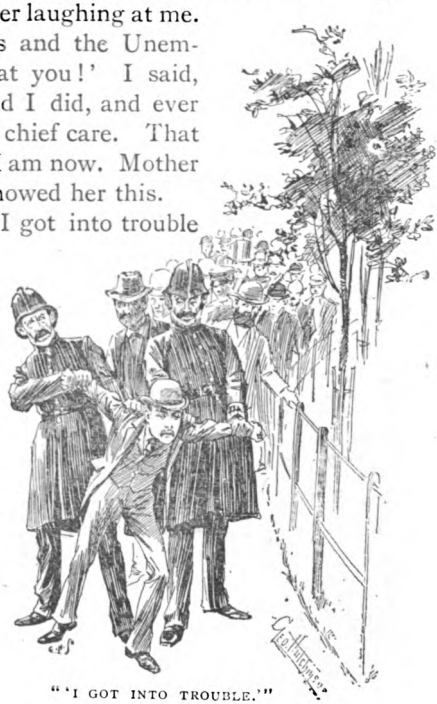
BURNS'S HOUSE AT BATTERSEA.

Briefly, let me picture the man's life. Nor can I do so better than in his own words. "I was born," said he, "here in Battersea, in November, 1858. My dear old mother brought us all up like Spartan soldiers. I owe much to her. I was educated at Christ Church Schools in this very district, which I now represent in the L.C.C. and Parliament. I fancy that even as a boy I held my present views. When I left school I went as a 'tiger' in top hat and top boots to a gentleman in Hampstead, and when I left him, having outgrown my uniform, I went as a potboy to the Winstanley Arms close by here. But I never drank. I became an apprentice to a firm of engineers, and here my political troubles began. I

used to address meetings in the country, and this coming to the ears of my superiors, I was discharged. However, the head of the firm, knowing I did my work well, insisted on my return.

"About this time, when I was sixteen years of age, I first appeared in print," and as he spoke John showed me a carefully-preserved cutting from the *Daily Chronicle*, February, 1875—a smart, though naturally rather crude, letter on "Mechanics and the Unemployed." "Ah!" said Burns, "can't I remember sitting down to that letter, and my mother laughing at me. '*You* write on the "Mechanics and the Unemployed." Why, they'll laugh at you!' I said, 'I'll have a try, anyhow.' And I did, and ever since the workless have been my chief care. That was my first step towards where I am now. Mother was here the other day, and I showed her this.

"A year or two afterwards I got into trouble for addressing a meeting on Clapham Common, and was taken before the magistrates. I was struggling with the police when that young lady," continued John with a smile, and pointing to his charming wife, who sat beside him, "caught a glimpse of me with my rough hair, flushed face and torn jacket. She was coming from church with her father, John Gale, a Deptford shipwright. I looked at her, she looked at me. We met again and again, and at last she became Mrs. Burns, and I won't tell you all she's been to me. Well—without her, I shouldn't be where I am to-day. Well, in 1880, times were bad, and I had no work here, so I accepted an engineering engagement on the West Coast of Africa. Here I worked for a year or two, and it was in that tropical, death-bound region that I found in the sand of the river Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, which I devoured. It was a revelation to me. It was that book and Robert Burns's saying, 'It is the most sorrowful thing in the world to see an honest man willing to work and unable to get it,' that really set me firm on this work



"'I GOT INTO TROUBLE.'"

of mine for the labouring masses. Adam Smith, Robert Burns, and my own hard lot have built me up into what I am. Whilst in Africa I studied very closely the habits of the natives, and from their primitive methods of life I deduced certain principles I thought would be applicable to civilised institutions *plus* that artistic and scientific knowledge that civilisation ought to give us.

"When I left Africa, which I did rather than be put over the head of my senior, who really had won the post that was offered to me, I came back to England. I had a little money in hand, and this I spent in travelling all over the Continent, studying the great galleries, wandering about the cathedrals—a splendid education for a man brought up as I had been. I there learned what *art* really means, and how big a piece of life it is. After a while I came back to work in England. Then times grew very bad. Distress came—the Trafalgar Square riots. I was the 'man with the red flag' then. Then came my imprisonment. I hold it as a cardinal principle that every man should go to prison as part of his education.

THE GARDEN.

"At that period when out of work, six or seven years ago, I helped as an ordinary day labourer to pull down old St. Martin's Workhouse. It was a good hard time, I can tell you." Just at this moment Burns's daily string of visitors began to pour in, and I sat back in my chair and watched them quietly. A County Council Forest Ranger asking for John's advice on certain improvements, which appeared to vex his righteous soul. Then some lads out of work seeking his help, readily promised or given. Then in came an old lady, a most direct and amusing person. She walked up to his little table, plumped down a bag of chinking sovereigns, and said, "There, John, there's

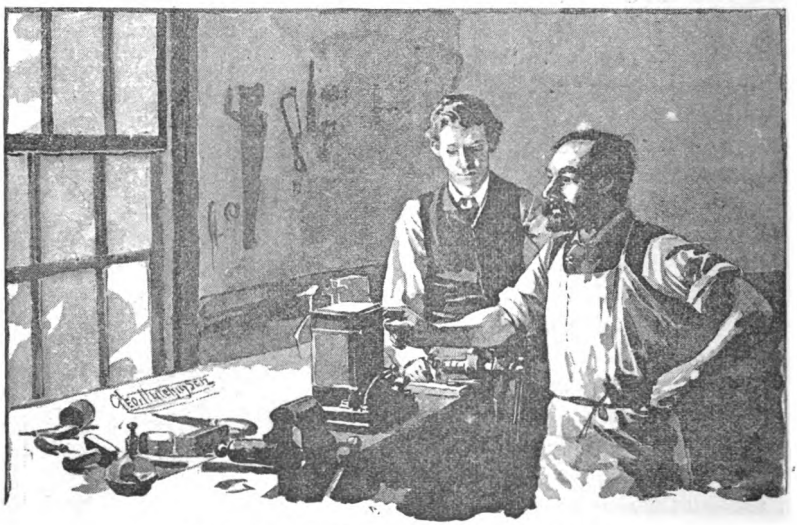
£86, all my savings; whatever you do with it, Mr. Burns, I shall be satisfied." A poor, thin, pale-faced girl next came asking for a ticket for a convalescent home. A man in trouble with his employer came for advice over a legal matter, and a rich man had sent £13,000 to John for the Albert Palace. It was a striking and impressive sight. The perfect confidence and love of all these people, the cheery, sympathetic manner, the keen insight of the "Judge Advocate General" himself; nothing that was not dignified and impressive. After they had left John turned to some dry County Council statistics, and to the inspection of some paint-brushes and material for the Council's workmen. "This is work," said he, "that I hate. But it must be done. I was made for a fighter, to lead a forlorn hope, to face a battalion of police. But this—ugh!" he continued, with a queer grimace. "However, my greatest victory in life has been the conquest of myself." Mr. Burns then took down a number of photos, some of which are reproduced here, and which show him at different epochs of his eventful life, and interesting and amusing enough they were too.

"'THERE'S ALL MY SAVINGS.'"

One smiles at the humorous grin which crosses the face of the clever engineer in his shirt-sleeves, when the news is brought him in his workshop that he has been elected a member of the London County Council. The smile widens into a laugh, that is not without an appreciation of the pathos of the scene, when "Burns is caught napping at last." After long days and nights of sleepless watchfulness, spent in the cause of the London 'busmen, John went to sit down in a chair with the terms of victory in his hand, only to fall fast asleep.

And, finally, we behold the man who has thus strenuously fought his way onward and upward seated in the House of Commons, "waiting for that day when inevitably he will be called to office," as I suggested to him on the occasion of my visiting him shortly after his return to Parliament. "No," he replied, with great simplicity, "I have not the slightest desire for

office. It is for me to give hostages to disinterestedness. The balance of advantage lies for years to come in the mere working man like myself exploiting the administrative ability of the middle and upper classes, we confining ourselves to its guidance and direction. I have done my best, and loyally tried to dignify the art of the demagogue, and my only way is by teaching and preaching, and convincing the people that the hunting for the loaves and fishes which one denounces in other people has no charm for oneself. I would sooner be plain '*John Burns*' than

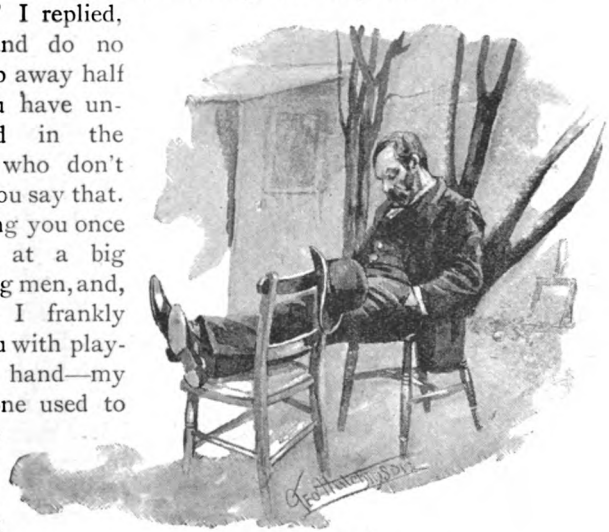


"THE CLEVER ENGINEER IN HIS SHIRT-SLEEVES."

the Right Honourable John Burns, Premier of England. There's a new *rôle* for fellows like me—the old-fashioned *rôle* of ædile or syndic, a job not necessarily sought for material reward so much as for usefulness and the honour it confers on recipient and giver." "But yet the loaves and fishes are not to be despised by anyone, and much less by one who has borne the burden and heat of the day," I objected. John shrugged his shoulders with a comical smile, as he replied, "Oh! I don't know, the fishes of office often stink. I declare to you," he continued, very earnestly, leaning his arms on the table and looking me straight in the face, "money hasn't a particle of attraction for me; I have had temptation enough that way, God knows. Within the last year or two I have returned to good-hearted men enough, but who don't understand me, some-

thing like £5,000 which they have offered me to help me in my fight for the people. But I don't want money or office either. Office!" he cried, with a fine scorn, "I am prouder of my present office, Judge Advocate General of the poor, than I should be of the Premiership itself; for many hours daily, as you have just seen, there is one continual stream of people in distress for work, in want of advice, claimants for insurances, and half a thousand other things. And they come to me, I tell you, my dear fellow, because they trust me, and they believe in me, and they *know* that I am working for their good and not for my own. The conviction is born in them that I am after neither office nor money, and they trust me."

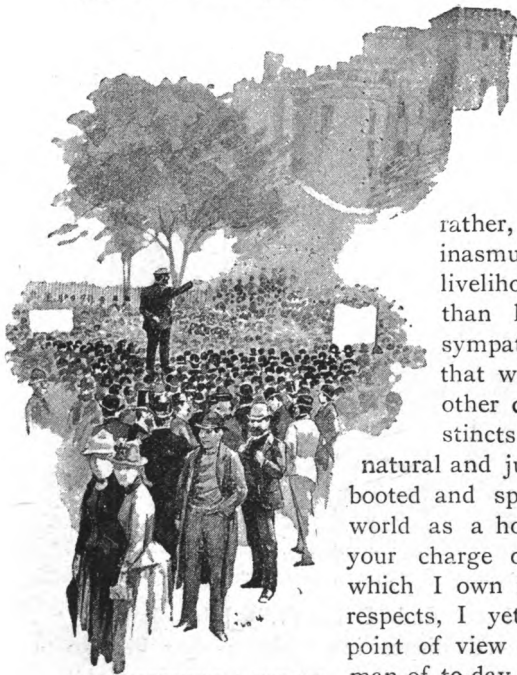
"Well, John," I replied, "you can say and do no more. You sweep away half the prejudice you have undoubtedly excited in the minds of people who don't know you when you say that. I don't mind telling you once I was speaking at a big meeting of working men, and, very mistakenly I frankly own, charging you with playing for your own hand—my gracious! how one used to hate you in those days—and some man called out 'Ah, you don't know John Burns, mister!' And I am glad to find I didn't." John laughed with that perfect sweetness of disposition which makes him so loveable. "Well," he replied, "you didn't know any better!" "No, I didn't," said I; "but at the same time all this makes one realise how very strong is your hold upon the people's hearts. Now, the thing is, what are you going to do with your influence in the future?" and as I spoke, a vision of John Burns, the First President of the English Republic, rose before me. "It's a serious responsibility." "Well," he replied, "I know it. But they trust me, and I trust them. The Trades Union movement of to-day is broadly typical of what the New Democracy will be *plus* rational education, hitherto the monopoly of the cultured classes.



"CAUGHT NAPPING."

This, coupled with the working man's common sense, will be on the whole not a bad blend. Of this I am quite certain," continued John, as he got up from his chair and paced up and down the little room—"a corrupt Government will never characterise the English Democracy."

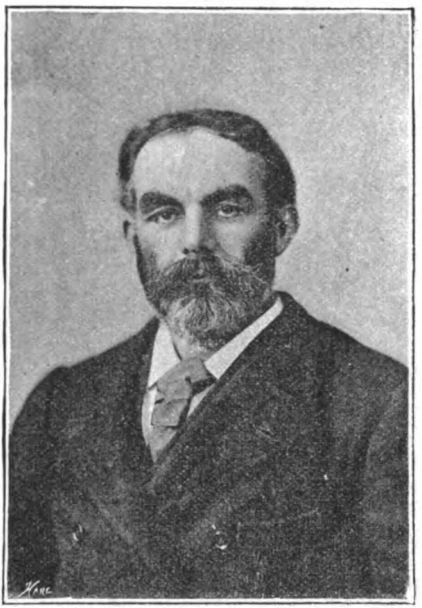
I put forward as an argument, which John owned, frankly enough, was not without reason or justification, the dissipated habits of many of the artisans of to-day; their love of drink and gambling, their predilections for literature of the worst kind, their ridiculous class prejudices. "Now, look here," said Burns, "you don't make allowance for the long history of their past. As a matter of fact, the British working man is no better or worse than the rest of the community; or, rather, I insist that he is better, inasmuch as that, in earning his livelihood under harder conditions than he ought, he begets a sympathy and feeling of justice that would be impossible under other circumstances, and his instincts are more inclined to be natural and just than those of the man, booted and spurred, who looks on the world as a horse to be ridden. As to your charge of drinking and betting, which I own is true enough in many respects, I yet say this, that from the point of view of sobriety, the working man of to-day is immeasurably superior to the working man of fifteen years ago—partly due to his increased love of athletics—and so, whilst the Drink Bill may increase in the aggregate, the amount per head diminishes fast. But you notice that just as much in the higher classes.



BURNS ADDRESSING A MEETING ON TOWER HILL.

"With regard to his love of betting, that is much more serious. It has become his curse. Here is the economic explanation: The monotony of his occupation. Machine industry tends to de-individualise a man in these days. In the old days of Greece

and Rome, and mediæval England, the reverse was the case; painting, sculpture, the high conditions of the crafts, brought out all a man's individuality, his best points. Oh! to have those days back again," sighed this man, whom so many have denounced as a hard, commonplace, matter-of-fact demagogue. "Man," he continued, "is a pleasurable animal, and must get it in sport if not in his work. I have come to think that the more the artisan of to-day has to work, the more he bets." "And for you who will lead them, Burns, what is your programme?" "Briefly," he replied, "my work in Parliament will be my work on the County Council on a larger scale, *i.e.*, a standing protest against Imperial Bureaucracy in foreign and domestic affairs; decentralisation all round; government by County Council; Colonies autonomous, and home rule everywhere, and to each section of the community that local autonomy without which Empire of the best kind is impossible. We must give to our Colonies the civilisation Rome and Greece gave to theirs, without the militarism that accompanied it." John then drifted into criticism of Cæsar and Cromwell, whilst I indulged in speculative dreams as to the future of the Cæsarean Cromwell who sat before me, declaiming so vigorously in his little parlour away down in the heart of modern Battersea. I awoke to hear him saying, "I tell you, Mr. Blathwayt, the sovereignty of the people is coming, everything points that way, and the democratic government of the future will be stimulated by the will and high character of strong personalities. The difference," continued he, "between the great man and the average man, after all, is very small. It is due to a stroke of genius or wit that is oft to madness near allied. Great men are only great in so far as they harness their greatness to the Chariot of the



JOHN BURNS.

Commonwealth. We must recognise the complexity of our times. Savonarola had wonderful influence, but he didn't live in the day of Ally Sloper and Lottie Collins. Life was simple and agricultural then. There was no press pandering to the petty side of human nature. Their few books appealed only to the higher side. There was none of the dissipation of energy that characterises the competitive study of to-day, and when men *could* be lifted, you had them from the lowest to the highest plane in a very short time. At the same time," he went on laughingly, "I don't want the Educated Democracy of the future to be a mere conglomeration of the Superior Person. He is loathsome enough at all times, but the Superior Workman would be something too awful!"

MRS. BURNS.

"People like myself often want to know, Mr. Burns, where you think you and your beloved Democracy will succeed, where those who have made England what it is have failed—failed, that is, according to the dictum of the masses." "I will tell you," he replied. "From the point of view of making England a great military and Imperial Power, the aristocracy of the past were grand. The Liberals and Whigs have made it a great Commercial Empire, but, our contention is, that this is not true greatness, not greatness in the sense that it means the real happiness of the Commonwealth. The greatness of the past has meant the division of spoils amongst the few, and to give *them* all those positions of privilege that Empire means. Empire means war, crises, the burdens of which fall upon the industrial Tommy Atkins. I want all the energy, not to say the heroism, that the governing classes have shown in the subjugation of foreign countries directed and utilised in administration, in industry, and in making happy our fellow-countrymen, which is, after all, no mean ambition."

John then depicted a Republic wherein Throne and aristocracy, Church and class, would for ever have melted into nothingness, and where even Religion—as religion is understood

to-day—would have been swept away. "Religion!" he exclaimed, "only retains its hold on people in so far as it ceases to be a spiritual agency, and vies with social and political agencies in attending to the material wants of the people." I did not entirely agree with this, and I said so. We argued the matter out for a little, and then I said, "Now, let me look at your books and manuscripts. They'll tell me what you are better than anything else could do."

John smiled affectionately as he gazed round his humble room. "Ah!" he said, "those books were bought with scores of meals, Mallock's 'Is Life Worth Living' represents a fierce battle in my mind as to whether it should be the book or a pair of boots, and the book won the day. Adam Smith's 'Wealth of Nations' I dug up in the sand of an African river. My gracious! what a revelation that book was to me! There is Carlyle, and there is Borth's 'Labour and Life of the People.' I have a very elaborate system as regards my library. All down here is the useful part. Mrs. Burns takes charge of the poetry. Mind you, I love poetry myself, and my Scotch friends are always sending me copies of Burns. They insist, you know, that I am descended from the poet. But I fancy there is little real connection between me and Bobbie Burns, much as I love his work. Two shelves, you see," continued he, "are entirely economic and social; nearly every one of those have been given to me by the authors themselves, and I value them very much. To your back are Trades Union Statistics, Eight Hours' Movement, &c., Blue Books and bound copies of labour papers. I have the best collection of Socialistic pamphlets in England. I have read them all. Yes," he added, noting my astonishment, "it has been hard reading, hard work, and harder living, which has brought me where I am to-day. Behind you are photos of Victor Hugo, Karl Marx, Cardinal Manning, Inspector Foster, my old City Police friend. There are portraits of members of various International Conferences I have attended. That cabinet there contains what is practically the whole history of the fifteen years of the Labour Movement. To show you how the interest in these matters has increased," said John, as he took out a whole armful of press cuttings, which he told me had arrived only that morning, "before the Dock Strike one short paragraph would have been considered ample, and here to-day are at least two hundred in one morning. It has been tremendous work though. I have helped to organise upwards of one

hundred Trades Unions, and been connected with something like forty strikes. It means reading and study that, I can tell you. Look here," he continued, as he put into my hands a small bundle of cards, on which were a number of notes and headings. "There," he said, "that's the guts of a Blue Book which it took the Government years of work to prepare. I try to have them at my fingers' ends. That's one of my arguments for young Members of Parliament. Working Class representatives enter too late in life, when all their energy and life is crushed out of them. That is how some of them have lost touch with the masses. I favour government by young men. Youth is the age of hope and enthusiasm, the period for sacrifice."

"'I'VE SOLD 60,000 O' THEM PICTURES!'"

I asked him what were the most memorable moments of his life. With a backward glance at the strenuous past, he slowly and thoughtfully replied:

"Upon my word, I don't know. Though perhaps this was the supreme moment of my life. We were on board a small launch in a branch of the sea on the West Coast. We had lost our propeller. My 'chief,' Mr. Parkin, said, 'I must dive for it.' 'No,' said I, 'you have a wife and family, I have not; I will go for it.' For five hours, I and half a dozen black men were swimming and diving for that propeller, haunted all the time by the fear of a shark nipping one of us in half. I can never forget it; the brilliant sky, the blue sea, the steamer, the men around me, and that ever-present fear. At last we found the propeller, and went on our way rejoicing. Then, again, I waver in my mind between that moment when I stood in the dock on trial for my life—prepared to receive ten years, but getting unexpected acquittal—and that moment when the Dock Strike was over, and I sprang on to a 'bus, and drove off with the people, cheering and waving their hats around me. Ah! that victory meant great things. How

great, none can yet know. I always think of Arthur Clough's lines. Do you know them?

> 'And not by eastern windows only,
> When daylight comes, comes in the light;
> In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
> But westward look, the land is bright.'"

As I took my leave John gave me a portrait of himself. "It's not the portrait of a handsome man," cried he, with a humorous smile, "but you must remember that neither words nor lineaments, but deeds, portray the man. Oh! I must tell you something that took place the other day. I was much amused. I was going down the street when I saw a man with a bag full of my portraits. So I asked him how he found it pay. 'Find it pay, gov'nor?' he cried. 'Now look 'ere, I don't mind telling you straight, John'—they all call me John—'I don't mind telling you straight, as you've asked me. I make more money out of your photos than you get from Battersea for all your work. I've sold 60,000 o' them pictures of yours in the last nine months, and there's scores of others could say the same!'" So, after all, an agitator's life is not so prosperous as is often assumed, but it is a happy life, especially when one sees in his own time his theories and ideals woven into the lives of the helpless and the poor, for whom to work is the noblest mission of man and woman. And with this we parted.

* * * *

P.S.—Though I do not in the least agree with Mr. Burns's strong political principles personally, I have not allowed my own old-fashioned Conservative ideas to blind me to his many brilliant qualities. This much it is due to myself to say, and it will probably add somewhat to whatever weight the article may carry with it.—R. B.

"IN OUR FRIEND'S FLOWER GARDEN.

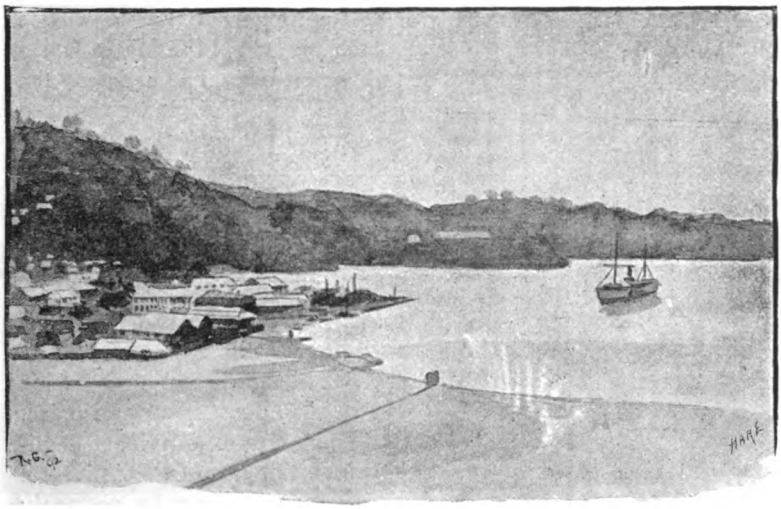
Snakes and Hospitality.

By Eden Phillpotts.

Illustrations by Ronald Gray.

A VIEW of the Northern Lesser Antilles, as one after another they rise over the sea like clouds, grow near and green and fertile, tower their verdure-clad sides up into the blue sky, kiss the grey and golden mists that hide their peaks, and then slowly vanish like clouds again—a view of these tropical islets from shipboard combines instruction with amusement to a most gratifying extent.

Every separate place has its own beauties and peculiarities,



ST. LUCIA.

and the mere mention of its typical features will tell a man familiar with the West Indies to what particular isle you refer. Thus, a blend of hospitality and serpents would instantly suggest St. Lucia to those who know the spot. It is, indeed, with that exquisite, reptile-haunted fragment of British territory this paper is concerned.

Only two circumstances, and both painful, marred the journey of the steamship "Rhine" from Barbados to Castries, St. Lucia. The first was a deplorable misunderstanding in the Cocktail Club; the second arose from the conduct of a French passenger.

Concerning the Cocktail Club, it is an extremely select body, and when I was made an honorary member thereof, nobody took any pains to hide from me what an honour had been done and how thankful I ought to be. The First Officer of the ship (ironically termed the Model Man, from his peculiar character, which combines some of the vilest traits in human nature and some of the noblest, with a horrid passion for guitar-playing superadded) is President and Mixer of the Cocktail Club. My brother, the Doctor, mentioned already, fills the duties of Secretary; the Treasure, also known to you, is Universal Provider of Beverages and Ingredients; and I am Honorary Member. We four constitute the Club; and we four, when ten miles distant from the ship's next port, had a very troubled and trying meeting.

"THE MODEL MAN."

The hour for the Matin Cocktail, seven a.m., had arrived; the cocktail whistle, blown by the Mixer, had summoned us from our cabins; the Model Man, clad in grey pyjamas with a blue stripe, stood at his table supported by bottles of Angostura Bitters, spirits, syrups, glasses, "swizzle-sticks," and all other paraphernalia proper to his office.

But at the critical moment his eye clouded, for there was no ice.

This meant criminal negligence on the part of the Universal Provider, and when he presently arrived, beaming as usual, he found, not a cocktail, but a Court-martial.

"A cocktail? Oh, certainly," growled the Doctor; "if you will explain to the Mixer how a cocktail is to be manufactured with credit to the Club under the circumstances, he will oblige you, no doubt."

"The circumstances being that we have no ice," said the Model Man.

The Treasure was very thirsty indeed, and he grew riotous and ignored the indictment, and consigned all the ice in the ship to a place where it must undoubtedly have commanded fancy prices.

The scene appeared really more impressive than it sounds, and we were about to pass a vote of censure, when the ice arrived, in the hands of a black boy; then, having consumed his cocktail, and forgetting his great size and strength, the Treasure grew exuberant and joyous, and knocked two-thirds of the Court-martial into the Model Man's bath, which had just been filled with Caribbean Sea. After that the proceedings terminated. But I never before saw a vote of censure taken in such a wrong spirit.

The other affair embraced a series of incidents; for the French passenger before-mentioned made the lives of people a burden by grumbling from morning until night about everything and everybody. He appeared to think the ship was full of secret societies, which had all leagued together that his peace of mind might be destroyed. First the black waiters, then the officers, then the passengers, were accused by him. At meals he was terrible. He said once:

"See! Again the stale bread, and everybody else have fresh. Again the cold soup, and everybody else have the hot. Again the leg of fowl, and everybody else have breast and wing and liver. It is shameful. The black devil garçons, they conspire to kill me."

"AT MEALS HE WAS TERRIBLE."

He was on the ship about forty-eight hours. and, during that period, wrote twelve letters to the Captain, setting forth his woes. These were duly handed to our Treasure, in his official capacity; and he designs to have them framed in oak with gilt beading, when he can afford it. Here is a sample communication:

"Dear Captain,

"You, next to God, being Captain of this ship, I writes once again that you may know how things make on this your vessel. To-day I have contretemps with egg-flip at bar. The man charge me for egg-flip which was not egg-flip at all, but young fowl, Captain; and by consequence I vomit him on main-deck.

"It is shameful. Notwithstanding the man charge me one shilling, which is most shameful still. Fear not that Messieurs the Steam Packet Company shall hear.

"I remain, yours to command."

That gives a good idea of the others. Each reminded the Captain that, after all, he was only the nominal commander of the "Rhine"; and each concluded with a dire threat to blast the reputation of the ship later on.

As we approached St. Lucia under a far-reaching brightness of tropic morning, the Fourth Officer, a man of great experience and every inclination to impart it at all times, called my attention to different objects of interest. The first points he particularly insisted upon were very lofty ones: Gros Piton and Petit Piton, two tall, conical, densely-wooded mountain peaks, shooting upwards from the shore. Before us extended the Bay of La Soufrière, and inland from it lay wondrous sulphur springs.

"EVERY INCLINATION TO IMPART."

"An English 'Jack' planted our flag on that Petit Piton when we were fighting the French here," said the Fourth Officer.

"Not a Frog could climb it, of course," he continued, "so they had to blaze away till they shot it down. But, another time, some middies tried to get to the top, and they were all lost—all died—stung to death no doubt."

"By what?" I asked, with some interest. "I hate everything that stings."

"By snakes," he answered. "Some of the vilest snakes in the world live here. There's Fer-de-lance—a tartar, he is; and there's Cribo—a black snake. He's pretty much to the front too in the matter of venom. The red coral snake at Trinidad is a bad lot, no doubt, but Fer-de-lance beats them all. He's the most interesting thing in St. Lucia."

"So interesting," I said, "that it now becomes a great question whether I shall land here."

Castries is a small, very beautiful port, hemmed in upon one side by low-lying land covered with cocoanut trees, on the other

by the towering terraces of Morne Fortuné. Even yet, upon the verdant acclivities of this mountain, may be observed steep, grass-grown tracks, cut through the foliage. Up these, in times past, was dragged the heavy ordnance that now strengthens the fort above. St. Lucia has a powerful garrison, well manned with English and black troops. Sugar, cocoa, and logwood are her present principal products, and the place struck me, from mere cursory observance, as in somewhat more prosperous and thriving condition than her sister isles. Whether this is really the case I know not.

St. Lucia was discovered by Columbus in 1502, but not until more than a hundred years later were any serious efforts undertaken to colonise. Then, for a time, the aborigines kept up their end of the argument, and preserved the integrity of their little empire.

The more I hear about these cannibal Caribs, the better I like them. There is little doubt that at one time they were far the most powerful of all so-called South American Indian tribes, and their manners and customs show much savage and instructive originality. They were wont to paint the bones of their dead relations artistically, and hang them in their houses. They themselves rarely wore anything save a suit of red vermilion dye, but they generally stuck pins and wooden skewers into their cheeks and lips to break their monotony of facial expression. Endurance was their particular virtue—in fact, the only one they recognised. Any private individual desiring the dignity of chieftainship was first bound to show the tribes that he kept himself under complete control. To do this he would sit down in the nests of ants, starve for days, and inflict horrible tortures of every description upon his person. If the ordeal was passed with no flinch or tremor, his superiority had to be conceded, and he became a very powerful and important personage; but when the ants or what not were too much for him, he found it necessary to retire into obscurity again.

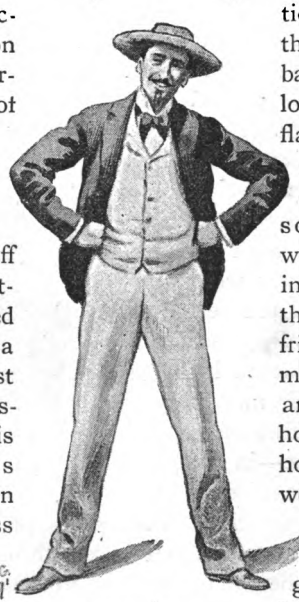
A CANNIBAL CARIB.

Civilisation appears to poison off these wild, interesting races. They cannot make a fight against printing and progress and

parliamentary procedure. Clothing breaks their proud hearts. To insist on their wearing raiment is like putting a tiger into trousers. Assuming he permitted the garment to stop on, it would presently kill him.

Take the natives of the Andaman Islands. These remarkable folks are rapidly becoming extinct. They fall before the march of civilisation like hay under the scythe; children are born, but they die in infancy; there will be no Andaman Islanders left in another generation.

After the poor Caribs were done with, St. Lucia was tossed about between England and France for many years; and it is worth noting, as an interesting fact, that, in 1794, His Grace the Duke of Kent, Her Majesty Queen Victoria's father, took an active part at the storming of Morne Fortuné. In 1803, however, the island finally became British property, and the storm of war blew itself out. These repeated changes have left a mark in several different directions, but nowhere more so than upon the dialect of the negroes. Their barbarous *patois*, their astounding jargon of lop-sided French and maimed English, flavoured with the Ethiopian twang, can hardly be suggested to those unfamiliar with it. I wanted to bring some home in a phonograph; the stuff would have made a sensation at meetings of the learned Societies; but I lacked the apparatus.



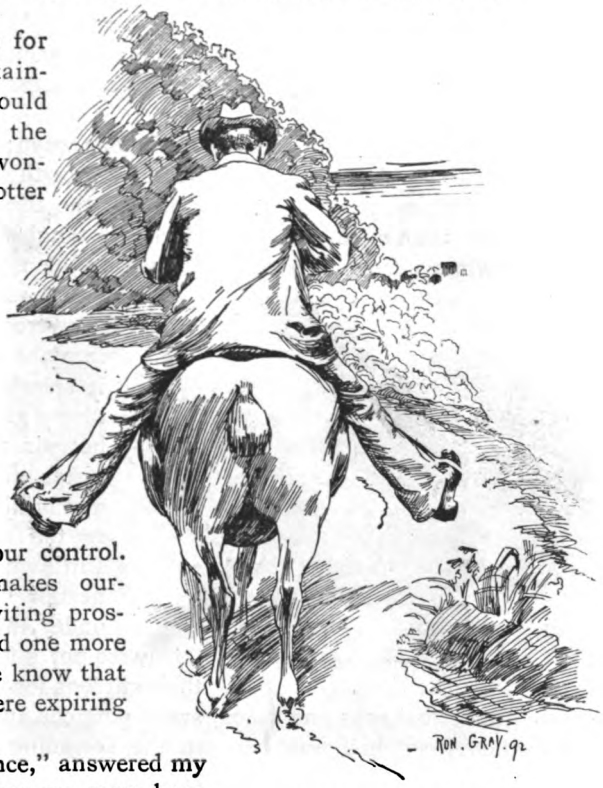
"THE DOCTOR'S FRIEND."

The Doctor had a friend at St. Lucia: one of the wealthiest men in the island, and quite the pleasantest. This amiable gentleman placed his house, his store, his servants and his horses at our disposal by letter, and, when we presently landed, a pair of high-class steeds already awaited us. Such frank kindness to travellers is very gratifying, and quite universal in the West Indies. People at home sneer at Colonial ways, and the lack of polish, delicacy and refinement therein manifested; but it not infrequently happens that these qualities are the pretty decorations that hide a little, mean, selfish soul. Colonials have bigger hearts than we have—I say it reluctantly, but

emphatically. Over and over again has their lavish, unexpected hospitality brought tears into my eyes; partly because they put too much red pepper into it, partly because exhibitions of fellowship and regard between strangers always delight me. If a few thousand self-seeking, greedy people, who regard all their fellow-creatures as stepping-stones or stumbling-blocks, could be persuaded to pay a long visit to the Colonies, they might lose a little of their polish, but would perhaps gain a thing or two better worth having.

Our host's design for a morning's entertainment was that we should ride his horses up the Morne, behold the wonderful scenery, then potter about St. Lucia where fancy might lead us, and presently return to him for luncheon. As we started, I said to the Doctor:

"You will agree with me that we must be cautious. We have another man's cattle under our control. To be stung by snakes ourselves is not an inviting prospect, but it would add one more pang to death did we know that these trusty steeds were expiring also."



"I BESTRODE A ROOMY PIEBALD."

"As to Fer-de-lance," answered my brother, "I only hope we may have the luck to fall in with one. I want him badly for my collection."

"To fall in with Fer-de-lance is tantamount to falling out with him," I asserted.

Then we began to climb. My brother had a little white nag, with energetic ideas; I bestrode a roomy piebald horse, whose extreme obesity led me to fear he would find the tremendous

acclivities of Morne Fortuné rather trying. We came to an understanding from the first. He said, in his horsey way: "Don't push me; let me go my own gait and all will be well."

And I said:

"Right! Suit yourself and you will suit me. You know the place better than I can."

His own gait was certainly tame to the verge of slowness. He evidently imagined the duration of life to be about a thousand years, and allowed ample time accordingly for all his duties. I found afterwards that he was simply a pampered, pet horse. His owner kept him for fun, and always regarded him as a sort of equine joke.

We started up steep and sinuous ways; we passed wonderful valleys and ravines, with luxurious growth of plantain and cocoa-nut palm, mango, breadfruit, and the like. The sides of the mountain were grandly clothed with tangles of creeper and lichen, twining from one tropical giant to the next. The fans of the palms were full of sunlight; it showered down like molten gold into the heart of the woods; it splashed and chequered the tawny ground and set all the hot air trembling. Pleasant vistas, full of purple shadows and brilliant foliage, stretched to the right and left of us. Little white West Indian homes nestled in the shade or basked under the sun's eye. There were not a few negroes' huts also, their gardens for the most part planted under bananas and cocoa, sweet potatoes and pigeon peas.

"GOOD OLD BOY!"

About half way between the spreading town below and the fortress above, we passed a detachment of black soldiers, toiling with some heavy gun-mountings. These masses of iron, with great volume of song and chorus, they were dragging upwards to the summit. They fussed and chattered and directed one another, and came near to driving their commanding officer out of his mind. I feared they might unduly agitate my steed, but our horses were clearly accustomed to the excitable Black, and passed by that noisy gathering with unconcern.

I patted my horse afterwards. I felt he deserved a word of praise, and said:

"Good old boy! You *are* a nice, self-contained, comfortable, broad sort of a horse, aren't you?"

He did not care about this, but only shook his head and replied:

"Don't let us have any humbug. There can be no regard between us; it is idle to pretend it. You don't care a straw for me, nor I a straw for you. Let me get on with my work, and you get on with yours; which, I take it, is to look about and make notes, and collect information."

He was a horse that had never cultivated the little amenities of life—not a surly horse exactly, but very reserved and independent.

From the top of the mountain we enjoyed a particularly magnificent view, and also the pleasing sight of English soldiers in red coats. Below us, extended Castries on one hand, and vast plantations of sugar-cane upon the other, whilst, beyond, the shores of the island stretched out into deep blue bays, divided by wooded promontories, fringed with palms and silver sands. A great wind came off the sea, fretting the waters with feathers of foam, swaying through the fields of cane, rustling in the forest, cooling us where we rode, on the crest of the hills.

"'YOU COULDN'T BEAT THAT ON THE EQUATOR.'"

The Doctor, unfortunately, knew St. Lucia, and now kindly undertook to conduct me back to town by short cuts of rather wild and uncertain nature. We started over a distinctly dangerous plank bridge, which bent beneath the weight of my piebald horse; we then plunged down a steep bridle-path into the woods. This led through an open spot amid tremendous trees and palms and brilliant creeping things, all in a haze of blue behind a dancing screen of light. Evidently we stood in the centre of a primeval glade.

"There! you couldn't beat that on the Equator," said my brother.

"Probably not," I admitted; "and another idea occurs to me. This I should judge must be the very home of Fer-de-lance. Here, doubtless, he holds his revels, and stings, without fear or favour, every decent thing that comes this way. Already I seem to see his wicked eye peering down from the crowns of the palms. Push along, there's a good chap, and get out of it. I feel as though I were following Death on his pale horse."

The Doctor resented this simile. He took it as a personal allusion to his profession, and replied: "Why can you never lose an opportunity to level a cheap jest at Medicine? If a snake did bite you, you would sing a very different song."

"WHEN THAT FELLOW-CREATURE APPEARED."

We struggled forward until the bridle-path disappeared in a sheer savage jungle. Then I said:

"I suppose you know where we are going to?"

He answered:

"Approximately, yes; the place has changed a good deal since I was here last. It seems more tropical than ever if anything. I wonder if these horses can climb at all?"

"I wonder if they can fly?" I said.

But the Doctor is satire-proof.

"They'll have to jump a bit, anyway, from the look of it," he continued.

"Mine can't," I answered definitely. "You've only got to glance at him to see he's not a jumping horse."

"He might roll down."

"He might do so alone, not with me on him."

We were now in a virgin forest. Probably no civilised foot had yet trodden that lonely fastness of nature; probably no human eye had ever flashed with enthusiasm at this noble scenery; probably no intelligent brain had ever before wondered which was the way out of it. Then a fellow-creature suddenly rose up from the centre of a cactus. The Doctor had just said that he felt like another Stanley in Darkest Africa, when that fellow-creature appeared and assured us we were doing a wrong thing. The virgin forest belonged to private people, who did not care about tourists pottering round in it.

I was rather pleased; it seemed so homely and sociable to be merely trespassing after all; but my brother showed irritation.

"Hang it, we've ridden about a mile. I suppose, just for once, we may go through, as we have come so far?" he asked.

"You may, if you are set on it," the man answered; "but, candidly, I should not. The road gets worse further on. It's dangerous riding; and snakes have been seen here too."

"If you proceed after that," I said, "you will do so alone. Personally, I turn here and go back the way I came, failing any shorter route.

"You're frightened," said the Doctor, thinking to shame me before a stranger; but he failed.

"Frightened isn't the word," I replied calmly. "I'm horrified, petrified, terrified at the position your knowledge of short cuts has placed me in. As to serpents, the man who refuses to be alarmed at poisonous varieties of them is a fool. Come on home."

My brother shrugged his shoulders, and we turned in our tracks, struggled back to a respectable road, and kept in the middle of it all the way to Castries.

Here ended my own experiences of Fer-de-lance. I cannot say that I actually saw him, but there is little doubt that I must have been extremely close to him at times, and that he saw me. Had he known how I was going to render him infamous in print when I returned home, it is easily conceivable that he would have taken steps to prevent my getting back at all. I asked after Fer-de-lance at the Zoological Gardens a few days ago, and Mr. Bartlett told me that they were unfortunately out of him just at present. He added that his proper style and title was Trigonocephalus Lanceolatus. This is neat and happy, especially the Christian name.

Before luncheon I purchased a few photographs from an absurd negress, who refused to bargain in the usual way, or allow any reduction upon wholesale transactions. It was impossible to trade effectively, because she did not care in the least whether I bought her pictures or left them.

"Dey free shillin' each, sar."

"But don't you see, Jane, if I take half-a-dozen, you ought to throw one in and let me have seven for the price of six. Merchants always meet good customers in this way. It will pay you better to sell seven for eighteen shillings than none at all. They are not astonishingly fine photographs; and you may have to wait years before anybody even asks to see them again."

"Dey free shillin' each, sar."

"Yes, I know, but the question is whether your judgment won't incline you to take half-a-crown each for ten of them. Shall we say one pound five shillings for ten, Jane?"

"Dey free shillin' each, sar."

"Oh, ail right. Let me pick out four or five. I'm afraid you will never make *your* fortune, Jane."

Then we lunched with the pleasantest man in St. Lucia, and enjoyed a very exceptional repast, though the giver of the feast was dissatisfied. He said:

"I'm awfully sorry, you men: a green turtle was coming, and it hasn't.'

"AN ABSURD NEGRESS."

He spoke as though the turtle had promised to drop in and give tone to the banquet.

The Doctor answered:

"You really cannot blame it. The thing probably knew exactly how it would figure at your hospitable board, so wisely stayed away."

We partook of an extremely interesting meal that afternoon. There were passion-fruits and bel-apples and black pines, and wondrous dishes not a few, some arctic in their chilly nature, others absolutely volcanic. Coffee and cigars brought the entertainment to a comfortable conclusion. These things were enjoyed under great palmettos and mango trees in our friend's flower garden; and then he and other West Indians came aboard with us to drink tea and visit the Captain of the "Rhine" before he sailed.

A young officer from the fort also joined us on board. We were old comrades, as he came out from England in my company. He told me that St. Lucia was a magnificent island, but he already began to yearn for home. His little wife said that she also began to yearn for home; but, she added sorrowfully, that it would be

necessary for them both to yearn about five years before they could get back.

Just before sailing a "sea-cat," or octopus, was captured alongside, and brought on board for the Doctor. When any particularly outrageous effort of Nature is found, and the Doctor happens to be at hand, the wonder is instantly brought to him, because people know that he bottles such things in spirits, and hangs them round his cabin and gets pleasure from them. The sea-cat justified its local name by crawling briskly about the decks; then he began to canter, and finally to gallop. So the Doctor secured him and led him away to be bottled. Before thus preserving the octopus it was necessary to take the poor creature's life, and my brother's endeavours to destroy it with prussic acid, strychnine and other potent poisons were very unedifying. These preparations acted upon it like mild tonics. First the Doctor blamed the ship's drugs, and then he found fault with his octopus. I asked our Model Man, who came along to criticise, if he would play a note or two on his guitar and put the unhappy "sea-cat" out of its misery; but, instead, having a pretty talent with his pencil, he set out to sketch the victim. He drew it as it was passing away, and asked me what I thought of the picture.

I said:

"Excellent, but you have given it about three dozen arms, and a careworn expression which is rather too human for the face of an octopus."

"I don't know," he replied; "it seems to me the thing would look careworn after what it has gone through lately."

Then we fired our cannon, awaking a thousand great and small rolling echoes that slept in Morne Fortuné; we gazed once more at the hills and forests and little shining town; we shook many friendly hands, and so departed from the midst of a flotilla of shore-boats filled with kindly faces.

The hospitality of the human inhabitants, and the venomous character of the local reptiles, are certainly leading features in the order of things at St. Lucia.

My Partners.

By Rose Ayscough.

Illustrations by A. S. Boyd.

"SHALL WE?"

THERE are ten distinct types of dancing men: one who can dance, and nine who can't—at least, I have met only nine, as yet. The one who can is generally to be found in the supper-room, the nine who can't are indefatigable, and never miss a single item. First among them, then, is the conscientious partner. Dancing with him is a sort of religious rite, not to be slurred over. If he misses a step he is unhappy until he has managed to make up for it by crowding an extra one in. Then there is the middle-aged man, very much out of condition, who has been told by his doctor that he is getting too stout. This gentleman takes it as an exercise, and takes good care that it is an exercise. He reckons to lose from half-a-pound weight to three-quarters over a polka. You lose half your dress and most of your hairpins, to say nothing of your temper. Next comes the man who has just learnt "waltzing in six lessons" (for a guinea paid in advance). This man kicks you steadily round the room, and then remarks, with a cheerful smile, that he doesn't think your step agrees with his; and you limp to a seat, wishing that crinolines had never gone out of fashion. Then there is the anxious, silent partner, who

"THE CONSCIENTIOUS DANCER."

never opens his mouth from the beginning of the dance to the end. All the time he is in a state of nervous tension. If you speak to him he looks at you reproachfully as much as to say: "How can you talk at such a moment as this, with all these people trying to run us down and trample on us!" His opposite is the careless chatterer, who babbles incessantly, and never looks where he's going. With this one, a dance is a prolonged tour of abject apology. When you are not apologising, you are being apologised to, sarcastically. An exceedingly objectionable partner is the man who hugs you, holding you so tight that you can scarcely breathe. You naturally struggle to release yourself a little, whereupon he exerts himself to retain you still closer. The impression conveyed to the observer is that you are fighting. To be equally avoided is the man who doesn't hold you at all, but who keeps you at arm's length and walks round you; as also the man who lifts you up and carries you round, talking soothingly to you the while.

"TAKES IT AS AN EXERCISE."

"KICKS YOU STEADILY ROUND THE ROOM."

"THE PARTNER WHO WALKS ROUND YOU."

With the boy who thinks dancing slow, and who therefore seeks to put some life into it on his own account, one is liable to feel more amused and less angry than one ought to be. For a while, wearing an expression of bored contempt for the whole proceedings, he spins you round in dignified silence. Suddenly his face lights up. "Mind yourself," he whispers, "I'm going to upset old Jenkins," and the next instant you feel a shock, and an elderly, pompous gentleman sits down heavily on the floor, and at once becomes the nucleus of a human mountain. "I think it such fun, running into people, don't you?" says your partner, as he whirls you rapidly away from the scene.

"'I THINK IT SUCH FUN, RUNNING INTO P OPLE, DON'T YOU?'"

Told by the Colonel.

IX.

THE ST. BERNARD MYTH.

By W. L. Alden.

Illustrations by R. Jack.

SOMEONE had told a dog story, showing the miraculous intelligence and profound piety of a French poodle. The Colonel listened with an incredulous smile on his grim face. When the story was ended, and we had all expressed our surprise and admiration—as is the custom when dog stories are told, and had carefully suppressed our conviction that the man who told the story was as impudent as he was mendacious—as is also the custom on these occasions—I asked the Colonel to favour us with his views in regard to canine sagacity.

"LISTENED WITH AN INCREDULOUS SMILE."

"There are dogs that show signs of good sense now and then," he replied. "Even human beings do that occasionally. But as to these yarns about dogs who calculate eclipses, and have conscientious objections to chasing cats on Sunday, I don't believe a word of them. Talk about fish stories! Why there isn't a fish caught or uncaught that can begin to stimulate the imagination to the extent that a dog will stimulate it. I have known fishermen who could convert two minnows into a string of thirty trout, averaging two pounds each, and I have seen those men slink away crestfallen before a man who told stories of what his fox-terrier had done the day before. What I don't understand is why people pretend to believe dog stories. We all know that the dog is a well-meaning, stupid, parish-vestry sort

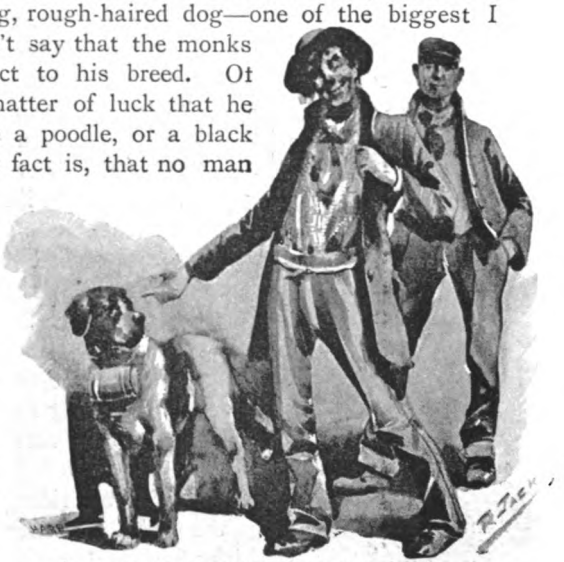
of an animal, but we listen to the thumpers that some men tell about him without even a cough.

"Look at the lies that have been told for the last hundred years about the St. Bernard dogs! People really believe that when a snowstorm comes on the St. Bernard dog goes out with a blanket, a flask of whisky, a spirit lamp, a box of matches, some mustard plasters, and a foot bath strapped on his back. When he meets a frozen traveller we are told that he sits down and lights his spirit lamp, mixes some hot whisky and pours it down the traveller's throat, gives him a hot foot bath, puts mustard plasters on the soles of his feet, rubs him down, and wraps him up in the blanket, and then hoists him on his back and brings him to the convent, where the monks put him to bed and read prayers to him till he feels strong enough to put some money in the contribution box, and to continue his journey. Now I've been to the St. Bernard Convent. I went there just to meet one of these dogs, and see for myself what he could do. There was a pack of about forty of them, but the only thing they did was to sit up all night and bark at the moon, while the monks shied prayer-books and wooden sandals at them out of the windows. I wanted to see a few travellers rescued from the snow, but the monks said the supply of travellers had been running low of late years; still, they added, that if I'd go and sleep in a snow bank a mile or two from the convent, they would see what could be done. I wasn't going to risk the forfeiture of my life insurance policy by any such foolish-

"THE MONKS SHIED PRAYER-BOOKS AND WOODEN SANDALS AT THEM."

ness as that, so I came away without seeing any dog performance. However, I saw enough a little later on to convince me that the St. Bernard dog is about the biggest kind of canine fool that ever imposed on credulous people.

"The monks had a whole pen full of genuine St. Bernard puppies, and I bought one. I am ashamed to tell you how much I paid for it. I could hire an army mule to kick me every time I think of the transaction. I took the puppy to the States with me—I was living at New Berlinopolisville, in the State of Iowa, at the time, and brought him up as carefully as if he had been my own son. He grew to be a big, rough-haired dog—one of the biggest I ever saw. And I can't say that the monks cheated me in respect to his breed. Of course it was all a matter of luck that he didn't turn out to be a poodle, or a black and tan terrier. The fact is, that no man nor monk knows what one of those pure-blooded St. Bernard pups that are sold at the convent will turn out to be when he gets his growth. He is liable to be anything in the line of dog from a yellow cur up to a Siberian bloodhound. I once knew a man who bought a St. Bernard pup from one of the very holiest of the entire gang of monks, and that puppy grew up to be a red fox. But you all know of that St. Bernard puppy lottery, and I won't take up your time commenting on it.



"SAID THE DOG HAD PROMISED THEM A DRINK."

"The monks told me that the puppy would not need the least training. His instinct was so wonderful that the moment he should catch a glimpse of snow on the ground he would rush off to rescue travellers. 'You just load him up with blankets and things,' said the monk, 'and send him out in the snow, and he'll rescue travellers till you can't rest.' The dog was nearly a year old before I had a chance to try his powers, but one November we had a regular blizzard, and when the snow quit falling it was at least two feet deep on a level, not to speak of the drifts.

"After breakfast I tied a whisky flask around the dog's neck, and put a blanket on his back, and told him to go out and begin his blessed work of mercy. I was alone in the house at the time, for my wife had gone on a visit to her mother, and the cook had got herself arrested for being drunk and disorderly, so there was no one to make any objection to my use of one of my wife's best blankets. The dog barked with delight when he saw the snow, and rolled in it for a few moments just so as to get the blanket good and wet, and then he started down the street at a gallop. I lived something more than a mile from the village, and there were no houses nearer than half a mile, and as the dog took the road leading away from the village, I did not think that he would stand much chance of picking up any travellers. He didn't return until noon, and then he didn't bring anybody home on his back. He did, however, bring six tramps with him, three of whom were pretty drunk, they having drank all the whisky in the flask. The other three said that the dog had promised them a drink if they would follow him, and they hoped that I would be as good as the dog's word. As I wasn't armed, and as the tramps carried big sticks, and evidently meant business, I judged it best to sustain the dog's character for veracity, and get rid of them peaceably. They went away after wrestling with a pint of good whisky, and all the time that idiotic dog was wagging his tail as if he deserved the Humane Society's medal, instead of deserving a thrashing for trying to rescue tramps when Nature had taken the trouble to furnish a blizzard expressly to thin them out.

"I explained to the dog with my riding whip the view that he must take of tramps in the future, and then I sent him out again, after filling up his whisky flask and giving him another blanket in the place of the one that the tramps had stolen. I told him that in future I should prefer to have him rescue women and children, especially the latter, and that if he found a frozen male traveller he had better confine himself to giving information to the police, instead of lavishing whisky on possibly undeserving people. He went off, somewhat humbled, but still in excellent spirits, and in a short time rushed up my front steps, dropped something on the door-mat, and rushed off again. At first I thought that the idiot had been rescuing somebody's linen that had been hung out to dry, but when the linen began to make remarks in a loud voice, I found that it was a particularly lively baby.

"Of course I couldn't let the little innocent lie and freeze on my doorstep, so I brought it into the house, and did my best to

quiet it. As I had never had much experience with babies, I found myself in a pretty tight place. I had no milk to give the baby, so I mixed a little flour and water till it looked like milk, and got a little of it down the baby's throat. Then I shook it on my knee till it dropped asleep. I put it in my bed, intending to go out and find some woman who would come and attend to it, when I heard the dog barking, and on opening the front door saw his tail disappearing down the street, and saw that he had left another infant on the door-mat.

"The first baby was a saint in comparison with this one, which was a sort of infantile tramp in appearance, and was as noisy as it was dirty. It would not have anything to do with the flour and water, and though I shook it on my knee till I must have loosened all its organs, it refused to go to sleep. So I finally gave it a rubber overshoe to bite on, and put it in a bureau drawer in the spare room, and told it to howl its head off if it felt that such was its duty towards mankind. Then I started a second time to search for a woman, and I nearly fell over a third baby on the doorstep. That infernal dog had brought it while I was struggling with the infantile tramp, and he was now off searching for more infants. I wrapped this one up in a blanket and sat down on the doorstep with it, resolved to wait till that dog came back, and to lock him up till I could get enough babies off my hands to give me a chance to kill him. I was bound not to miss him, for if I did he would probably keep on till he had brought me all the babies in the county. This baby was the best of the lot, for it slept in my arms without saying a word, or expressing the slightest desire to be shaken. In about twenty minutes the dog reappeared with another invoice of babies. This time he brought a brace of twins, as nearly as I could judge, but it was his last exploit that day. I got him by the collar before he could start out again, and locked him up in the cellar. The babies I put in a heap in a big clothes-basket that they could not climb out of, and left them to have a crying match for the championship till I could find a nurse.

"DID MY BEST TO QUIET IT."

"I didn't have as much trouble in that matter as I had anticipated, for before I could get out of the house someone rang the front door bell, and pounded and yelled as if it was a matter of life and death that the door should be opened instantly. I opened it, and there was a woman who called me every name she could lay her tongue to, and wanted me to give her back her baby instantly. I showed her the babies, and told her to take her choice. In fact, I begged her to take away the whole lot, but she said I was worse than a murderer, and after selecting one of the least desirable of the babies, she rushed off with it, promising to send me a policeman immediately. I had never expressed the least desire to see a policeman, but such is female gratitude! I had offered that woman five babies, free, gratis, and for nothing, and instead of being grateful, she wanted to get me into trouble.

"CALLED ME EVERY NAME SHE COULD LAY HER TONGUE TO."

"I had still four babies on my hands, and as they were now all awake and making all the noise they knew how to make, I put them all in the clothes-basket together, so they could enjoy one another's society. It wasn't a bad plan, and I recommend it to any mother with a noisy pair of twins, as it is certain to reduce the noise by one half. Two of my babies were so occupied with putting their fingers in the other babies' eyes, and in investigating their hair, that they had no time to cry. I admit that the two who were undergoing investigation did their best to make a riot, but even then there was only half as much noise as there would have been had the other two joined the concert.

"I thought it so probable that the mother who had visited me was only the first of a procession of mothers, that I gave up the idea of going out to look for a nurse, and stayed at home to receive the mothers politely. It was not long before one presented herself. She was an Irishwoman, and the only sensible one of the lot. When she saw that her baby was safe and contented, and had a good grip on the hair of a black-eyed baby, she sat down and laughed, and said that she never saw anything so sweet before.

According to her account, she lived about a mile from my house, and she was standing at her front door looking at the landscape, when the dog bounded in, caught up the baby out of the cradle, and carried it off. At first she thought the dog was the devil, but presently she remembered that the devil's time was too much occupied with Irish affairs to permit him to steal babies in Iowa, so she followed the dog as rapidly as she could make her way through the snow. She tracked him by the prints of his paws, until she came to my door, and instead of calling me a kidnapper, and talking about the police, she was full of pity for me, and volunteered to stay and take care of the whole menagerie until the last of the babies should be called for and taken away.

"SHE LAUGHED."

"The remaining mothers arrived in the course of an hour. I locked myself in the top of the house and left the Irishwoman to explain things. As I afterwards learned, the intelligent dog had knocked two women down in the street and stolen their babies out of their arms, and had also broken into two houses, in the last one of which he had bagged his brace of twins. All the mothers, except the Irishwoman, were as unreasonable as they could possibly be. They insisted that I deliberately trained dogs to steal babies, and they had no doubt that my object in stealing them was to vivisect them. As for the dog, they were convinced that he was mad, and that their babies would be sure to die of hydrophobia. Two of the women brought their husbands with them, who asked to see me, explaining that they desired to blow my head off. The Irishwoman nobly lied to them, telling them that she had driven me out of the house with a club, and that I

was on my way to Chicago, and far out of reach. The mothers and their husbands went away at last, and as soon as it was dark I stole out of the back door and took the first train for St. Paul's. I didn't show myself in New Berlinopolisville for the next year.

"What became of the dog? Oh! I forgot to say that the Irishwoman promised to take care of him and to cure him of his passion for babies. I am sorry to say that she did not succeed. She kept him tied up for six weeks, but one day he broke loose and captured a baby out of a baby-wagon in the park. But the baby's father happened to be with it, and he was one of the best pistol shots in town, having been a judge of the Montana Supreme Court. He got the drop on the dog before the beast had gone ten feet away with the baby, and though they afterwards had to pry the dog's jaws open in order to get the baby loose, no harm was done to the latter. I settled all the law suits without letting them go to trial, although it cost me considerable, and I finally judged it best to remove to another State.

"HE GOT THE DROP ON THE DOG."

"Now I suppose that someone will be enough of an idiot to repeat this story with variations, as a proof of the wonderful intelligence of the St. Bernard dog. If it is intelligence that leads a dog to steal other people's babies and dump them on a respectable man, I'd like to see what idiocy would do for such a dog. No, sir! Depend upon it, the stories about St. Bernard dogs are invented by the monks after stimulating their minds by reading the *Lives of the Saints* and by going trout-fishing. Probably the monks have gradually brought themselves to believe most of the stories. They look like a credulous set of people, and I should rather like to try them with a good American political speech, full of campaign statistics, and see if they could believe it. I shouldn't be in the least surprised if they could."

The American Claimant.

By Mark Twain.

Illustrations by Hal Hurst.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Meantime a note came to Rossmore Towers to say that the Earl of Rossmore had just arrived from England, and would do himself the pleasure of calling in the evening. Sally said to herself:

"He has come over here to tomahawk papa, very likely—or buy out his claim. This thing would have excited me, a while back; but it has only one interest for me now, and only one value."

Tracy couldn't know he was to be invited for the morrow, or he might have waited. As it was, he was too miserable to wait any longer; for his last hope—a letter—had failed him. Had his father really flung him away? It looked so. Anyway, he would go to the Towers and—then, what? He didn't know; he wouldn't think about what he must do or say—let it all take care of itself. So that he saw Sally once more he would be satisfied.

He hardly knew how he got to the Towers, or when. He knew and cared for only one thing—he was alone with Sally. She was kind, she was gentle, there was moisture in her eyes, and a yearning something in her face and manner which she could not wholly hide—but she kept her distance. By-and-bye, she said—watching his downcast countenance out of the corner of her eye:

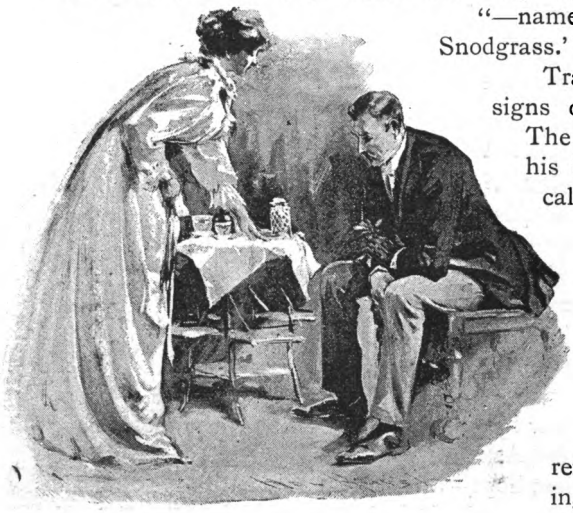
"It's so strange. I try to read, but I can't get interested in any book. I try the newspapers, but they do put such rubbish in them. You take up a paper and start to read something you think's interesting, and it goes on and on and on about how somebody—well, Doctor Snodgrass, for instance——"

Not a sign from Tracy. What supernatural self-possession! Sally fixed her eye on him and began again, resolved to blast him out of his serenity this time.

"And next it goes on and on and on about the eldest son, and how he is allowed to grow up unschooled, ignorant, vulgar, the comrade of the community's scum, and become a rude, profane, dissipated ruffian——"

That head still dropped! Sally rose, moved softly, and stood before Tracy—his head came slowly up, his meek eyes met her intense ones—then she finished with deep impressiveness—

"—named 'Spinal Meningitis Snodgrass.'"



"SALLY STOOD BEFORE TRACY."

Tracy merely exhibited signs of increased fatigue. The girl was outraged by his iron indifference and callousness, and cried out—

"What *are* you made of?"

"I? Why?"

"Haven't you *any* sensitiveness? Don't these things touch any poor remnant of delicate feeling in you?"

"N-no," he said wonderingly. "Why should they?"

"Oh, dear me, *how* can you look so innocent and foolish, and good, and empty, and gentle, in the hearing of such things as those! Look me in the eye—straight in the eye. There, now then, answer me without a flinch. Isn't your name Spinal Meningitis, and isn't your father Doctor Snodgrass, and isn't he an idiot, and doesn't he name all his children after poisons and pestilences? Answer me. *Why* do you sit there and see me going mad before your face with suspense?"

"Oh, I wish I could do something, *anything* that would give you peace again and make you happy; but I know of nothing. I have never heard of these awful people before."

"What? Say it again!"

"I have never, never, in my life till now."

"Wait—one more thing. Tell me you told that falsehood out of mere vanity and are sorry for it; that you are *not* expecting to ever wear the coronet of an earl——"

"Truly I am cured—cured this very day—I am *not* expecting it!"

"Oh, now you *are* mine! I've got you back in the beauty and

glory of your unsmirched poverty and your honorable obscurity, and nobody shall ever take you from me again——"

"De Earl of Rossmore, from Englan'!"

"My father!" The young man released the girl and hung his head.

The old gentleman stood surveying the couple—the one with a strongly complimentary right eye, the other with a mixed expression done with the left. Presently his face relaxed into a kind of constructive gentleness, and he said to his son—

"'MY FATHER!'"

"Don't you think you could embrace me, too?"

The young man did it with alacrity.

"Then you *are* the son of an earl, after all," said Sally, reproachfully.

"Yes, I——"

"Then I won't have you."

"Oh, but you know——"

"No, I will not. You've told me another fib."

"She's right. Go away and leave us. I want to talk with her."

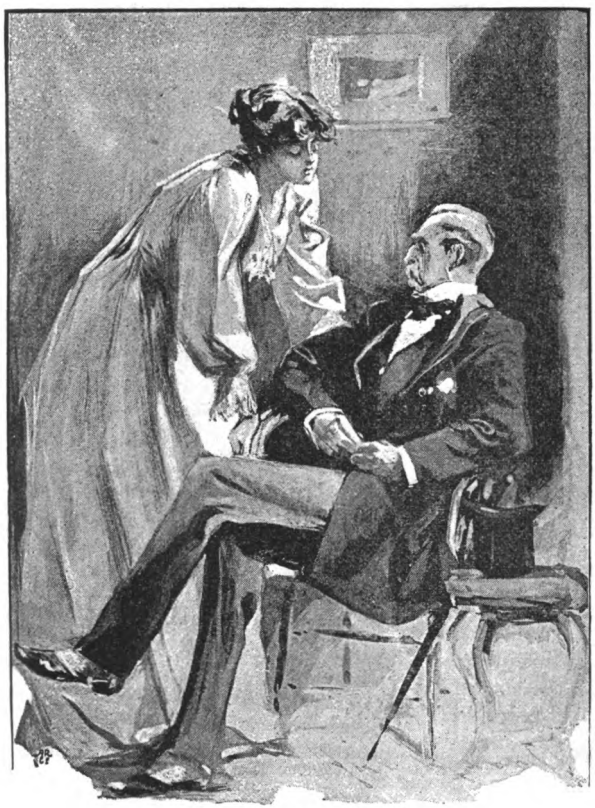
Berkeley was obliged to go. But he did not go far. At midnight the conference between the old gentleman and the young girl was still going blithely on, but it presently drew to a close, and the former said—

"I came all the way over here to inspect you, my dear, with the general idea of breaking off this match if there were two fools of you, but as there's only one, you can have him if you'll take him."

"Indeed I will, then! May I kiss you?"

"You may. Thank you. Now you shall have that privilege whenever you are good."

Meantime Hawkins had long ago returned and slipped up to the laboratory. He was rather discontented to find his late invention, Snodgrass, there. The news was told him "that the English Rossmore was come, and I'm his son, Viscount Berkeley, not Howard Tracy any more."



"'MAY I KISS YOU?"

Hawkins was aghast. He said—

"Good gracious, then you're dead!"

"Dead?"

"Yes—we've got your ashes."

"Hang those ashes, I'm tired of them; I'll give them to my father."

Slowly and painfully the statesman worked the truth into his head that this was really a flesh and blood young man, and not the unsubstantial resurrection he and Sellers had so long supposed him to be. Then he said—

"But look here—what do you suppose became of the man you've been *representing* all this time?"

"I don't know. I saved his clothes—it was all I could do. I am afraid he lost his life."

"Well, you must have found twenty or thirty thousand dollars in those clothes, in money or certificates of deposit."

"No, I found only five hundred and a trifle. I borrowed the trifle and banked the five hundred."

"What'll we do about it?"

"Return it to the owner."

"It's easy said, but not easy to manage. Let's leave it alone till we get Sellers's advice. And that reminds me. I've got to run and meet Sellers and explain who you are *not*, and who you *are*, or he'll come thundering in here to stop his daughter from marrying a phantom."

So Hawkins departed to prepare the Sellerses.

Rossmore Towers saw great times during the succeeding week. The two earls were such opposites that they fraternised at once. Sellers said privately that Rossmore was the most extraordinary character he had ever met—a man just made out of the condensed milk of human kindness; a man whose whole being was sweetness, patience, and charity, yet with a cunning so profound that many a person might live with him for centuries and never suspect the presence in him of these characteristics.

"THERE WAS A QUIET WEDDING."

Finally, there was a quiet wedding at the Towers. The art-firm and Barrow were present, and the tinner and Puss had been invited, but the tinner was ill, and Puss was nursing him—for they were engaged.

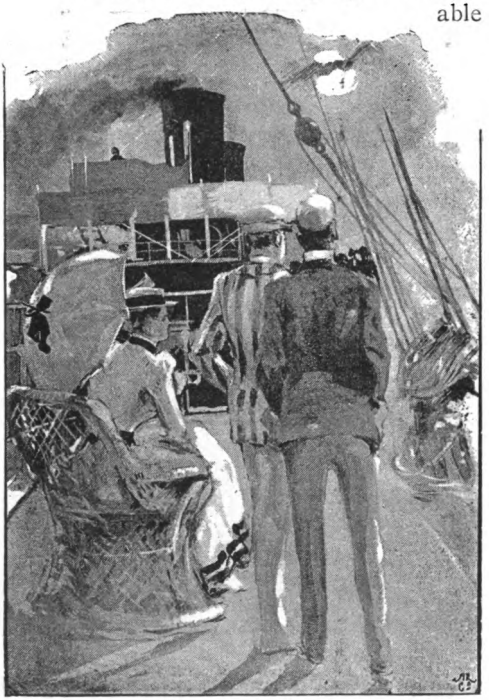
The Sellerses were to go to England with their new allies for a brief visit, but when it was time to take the train from Washington the Colonel was missing. The explanation was in a letter left by the Colonel in Hawkins's hands. In it he promised to join Mrs. Sellers later, in England, and then went on to say:

"The truth is, my dear Hawkins, a mighty idea has been born to me within the hour, and I must not even stop to say good-bye to my dear ones. I have conceived the stupendous idea of reorganising the climates of the earth according to the desire of the populations interested, and I am leaving for San Francisco to test my plan by the aid of the great Lick telescope. I shall furnish climates to order for cash or negotiable paper, taking the old ones in part payment, where they are in condition to be repaired at small cost and let out to poor and remote communities not able to afford

good weather. My studies have convinced me that the regulation of climates and the breeding of new varieties at will from the old stock is a feasible thing.

"I will confide to you an outline of my idea. It is to utilize the spots on the sun. At present they merely make trouble in the evoking of cyclones and other kinds of electric storms; but once under humane and intelligent control they will become a boon to man.

"I have my plan all mapped out, but I will not go into particulars before the patents shall have been issued. I shall hope and expect to sell shop-rights to the minor countries at a reasonable figure, and supply a good business article of climate to the great empires at special rates, together with fancy brands for coronations, battles, and other great and particular occasions. There are billions of money in this enterprise, and I shall begin to realize in a few days—in a few weeks at furthest.



"MULBERRY SELLERS'S SIGN."

"Meantime, watch for a sign from me. Eight days from now we shall be wide asunder, for I shall be on the border of the Pacific, and you far out on the Atlantic, approaching England. That day, if I am alive, I will send you greeting, and my messenger shall deliver it where you are, in the solitudes of the sea; for I will waft a vast sun-spot across the disc like drifting smoke, and you will know it for my love-sign, and will say, 'Mulberry Sellers throws us a kiss across the universe.'"

[THE END.]

Barr on good resolutions.

Let's all turn over a new leaf and make good resolutions. October is the month for the falling of the leaf; January the month for the turning of it. Many people are in the habit of turning over a new leaf at the beginning of the year. This is a most commendable practice, and should be encouraged by all right-thinking men. Of course, if the New Year's resolutions were ever kept it might be a serious business. Trade would be interrupted, tobacco shops might have to close, and the revenue of the country from the sale of certain liquids would be endangered. But experience has shown that the stalwart resolutions made are rarely lived up to, and, this being the case, the making of them ought to be encouraged, for whenever a man turns over a new leaf he experiences a feeling of self-satisfaction that nothing else can give. By taking a day off during the holidays, a person may easily write out a catalogue of his worst faults—if he has paper enough. A choice selection should be made from this list, and the faults so selected should be firmly abandoned from the first stroke of the clock that ushers in the New Year. A person of great strength of character ought to be able, if he has any luck at all, to keep from committing the faults for at least a fortnight. This may seem like optimism, but I believe it can be done. Some foolish people lump their injurious habits together and "swear off" all at once. Such wholesale "swearing off" generally breaks down the second day. There is nothing like moderation, even in great resolutions.

* * * *

He tells how "swearing off" should be done.

As to the best methods of "swearing off," opinions differ. It is an advisable plan to write down your good resolutions and specify the faults to be abandoned. It would be rather annoying to find that you had been, say for a month, with much self-denial, avoiding the use of bad language only to discover that smoking was the error

you had resolved to turn your back on. A little forethought and method, as, for instance, getting a lawyer to draft out your resolutions, prevents mistakes of this kind occurring. Some people draw up their New Year resolutions in legal form, and have the paper stamped at Somerset House. This costs sixpence, and is worth the money, for it gives, in a way, the backing of Her Majesty's Government. It is much better than using the ordinary penny receipt stamp on the paper. Care must be taken of this important document, and it is better to preserve it in a safe deposit vault, or in your desk at the office, rather than leave it lying around at home. It is embarrassing to discover that your wife has found a copy of your good resolutions six months after you have forgotten all about them. She is rather prone to use them as evidence against you in the heat of a family discussion.

* * * *

He does not believe in the efficacy of the diary.

I do not approve of the ordinary or diary form of "swearing off." People, in the beginning of the year, are in the habit of buying the common or one shilling diary, for the purpose of jotting down various events, appointments, chance thoughts, and such like mental *débris*. Of course, the diary is seldom used after the first few days, but the intention of using it undoubtedly exists, else the valuable shilling would not have been spent. The diary form of "swearing off" consists in writing on the page labelled "Jan. 1st" some such sentiment as this: "Have resolved from this day forward not to drink any more soda water. I find it debilitating and expensive. If compelled to use it by the doctor's orders, I resolve to tincture it with some other liquid which will take the chill off." This twelvepenny variety of "swearing off" is rarely effective, it is too cheap to last long. A year ago this January, a great author wrote on the first page of his new shilling diary that he would endeavour for the next few months not to be so conceited as he had been during the year then ended. He would try to remember, he wrote, that Shakespeare and a few others had produced really creditable work quite entitled to stand beside his own. He kept his resolution just twenty-four hours, which goes to prove the uselessness of the diary form of "swearing off." This year, he will take the precaution to have his document stamped. In order to be of assistance to him and others who write, I will here set down what a publisher said to me the other day. "What volume," he asked, "do you think sells best in the English market?" I mentioned the works of several celebrated authors, but he shook his head at all of them. "No," he said at last. "The

book which has the largest sale is Blank's Diaries—white paper and binding! Blank can get more for an edition of unprinted paper than I can for an edition by the most famous author in the world." Think of this, O Celebrity at Home, and be modest.

* * * *

Mrs. Lynn Linton queries whether man ever does reform.

Religionists would say yes—by the Grace of God. That Grace poured into us from above, as wine might be poured into a cup, alters the whole nature of a man, and renders that sound and wholesome which erstwhile has been foul and corrupt. So it may be; the spiritual part of us having mysteries which philosophy cannot fathom nor denial destroy. In any case, whether this grace effects the change by extraneous and supernatural influence, or whether belief that it does reacts on the mind and creates the thing it believes, sure it is that a reprobate can be converted, and live in cleanliness and good repute ever after. Of this most of us have known instances in the course of our lives, and have seen the reformation stand the test of time and trial to the end; though, also, we have all known cases of partial, temporary, and superficial conversion, when the whole thing was mere lacquer, and thin at that, and the morality of the man lasted for only so long as it was a novelty, and broke down when that novelty had passed and before habits had been formed. Ambition, also, may do something in reforming a man; and love can do more. Touch a man's sense of dignity, too—touch it to the quick—and perhaps he will struggle out of the slough where he has been too long content to dwell. It all depends on how deep the reactionary sentiment goes. If a man has more ambition than sensuality, he will, when he thoroughly understands that his present way of life is suicidal, throw wine, women, cards, and the racecourse to the winds, and sit down in the high place of the rigid moralist as starch and prim as if his eyelids had never been red with wine nor his lips swollen and blurred. Indeed, these reformed rakes generally make the most rigid moralists of all. Forgetting the time when they, too, grovelled at the feet of Circe, they have nought but whips of scorpions for those who are still in their past plight. The weaknesses which they have conquered, after frantic indulgence has perhaps paved the way through satiety, they fall foul of in unmeasured terms where others are concerned; and, for the most part, they affect a virginal kind of innocence, surprised that such things could be, as sometimes on the bench learned judges affect the ignorance of a "*sepolta viva*" on the personality of a famous actress, the meaning of a current slang expression, or the possibilities of human degradation.

Thinks it doubtful.

But we have seen how ambition can be the grand detergent for a smirched soul and corrupted life. History tells us that; and Falstaff's Hal is not the only instance of self-respect, under whatever form we like to take it—as ambition or as the sense of duty—coming to the aid of virtue, and reforming a man before too late. So with love. All women are inclined to this belief in themselves and the power of love. Most of them have a weakness for the reprobates of society, if the man has any lovable quality whatever to counteract that certain shrinking which vice *per se* causes them. The mystical sinner, who talks like a tortured saint forced to do the thing he would not while acting like a blackguard without heart or conscience, is sure of a feminine following—sure to find one or more who believes herself strong enough to pluck this poor precious brand from the burning, and to hold fast that supplicating hand held out for help. The good-natured, generous, affectionate kind of scamp, who makes love to his neighbour's wife and borrows of his neighbour's purse at one and the same time, he, too, is never held to be as bad as he is painted; and he is always more the victim than the destroyer. His reformation could easily be brought about by a good woman—so they think; and more than one would not hesitate to make the trial. As for the masterful men—the men with brains and strong will—men of the Corsair type who have one virtue for a thousand crimes, they may have the pick of all the pretty Medoras in their path. They exercise that subtle power we call fascination, and their reformation is a thing of time only—time and the right woman—who is generally too innocent to understand the thing to be undertaken, and too weak to guide herself, still less another.

* * * *

A thing not to be too readily believed.

But she loves: and to this kind Love is the one supreme conqueror of all things in human life and nature. Yet, for all the old adage which sets forth that a reformed rake makes the best husband, the experiment comes to grief more often than not, and the washed and well-groomed pig returns to his wallow as certainly as the Reverend John Creedy returned to his old rites and ceremonies. A man's reformation is purely the result of that thing which is known by the name of the balance of forces. If his will be in excess of his sensual desires he will be able to break away from his pleasant vices when he sees that further indulgence spells ruin of all else that he may covet. If his will be weaker than his sensuality, his love of pleasure, his craving for excitement, he will not be able. He

may try, and flounder, but he will fall back, and perhaps sink deeper than before. His ambition becomes the sacrifice of real life to an empty form. His pride and self-respect are but the vain tinkling of a cymbal compared to the grand diapason of an exquisite orchestra. Love is a fetter, and the love of one only cloys and clogs the spirit born for the delectation of many. All the arguments which for a time went one way are suddenly inverted and go to the opposite; and the gossamer threads by which virtue sought to bind the reprobate to herself, snap like tow in the hands of a giant. Unfortunately, these relapses are more common than steadfast, determined and enduring reformation; which yet is a fact, and can be counted on as a fact, given a man's power of will, whether acted on by religious faith, by ambition, by self-respect, or by love. But it is a thing to be wary of, and not to trust too readily.

* * * *

Burgin manufactures good resolutions.

Of course, one always manufactures good resolutions at the commencement of the year. All your relatives would have a right to be disappointed if you didn't make such a concession to sentiment; and they'd cut off the usual hampers to mark their disapprobation. These little annual formalities must be observed. Besides, there is a certain pleasure in sitting by the yule log and reflecting with an air of pepsine-chastened melancholy that you're going to do better when you've time. The trouble about making all these good resolutions is that a man tries to do too much at once. No one can get to the top of the house at one jump; he must go up a ladder step by step. Everybody fixes New Year's Day as the time to begin, utterly regardless of the fact that New Year varies wherever a man may be, and that the Scotchman has one New Year's Day, the Turk another, the Jew another. Some nations, indeed, commence the New Year by solemnly cursing their enemies: it's all a matter of taste. No one, so far, I believe, has ever investigated the cause of all these emotional resolves to do better. For eleven months out of the year we are content to go our way, feeling neither better nor worse than the majority of our neighbours. But with the New Year we become as keenly analytical as Henry James or Howells. All the sin and misery of the world are to be encountered by a cheerful optimism. We are to write the great book, make the great *coup*, win the Victoria Cross, and so on. And yet, we sat by the fire last year and made the same resolutions, had the same high aspirations, hopes, and fears. And the world has gone on just

the same. Some of us rest beneath the quiet clay. Some have dropped out of the race, and we cross the other side of the road to avoid them. Our pulses beat more feebly, the old aims grow fainter. We submit to New Year festivities as if unconscious all the while that they were originally devised by medical practitioners with a view to laying the foundations of a remunerative practice. For my own part, I am convinced that a great deal of our immorality, as a nation, is traceable to New Year resolutions. We grow so good on the strength of these resolutions that it is absolutely necessary we should do something wrong in order to enable our neighbours to come within measurable distance of us.

* * * *

Morley Roberts declines to reform.

A man's chief duty is to be himself. To make good resolutions means altering one's self, and that is to fly in the face of Providence, who, like Mr. Gladstone, always knows best. We should recognise this at Christmas time, and not allow any reasonable amount of indigestion to depress us into remorse. I date my own moral ruin from being associated in my youth for a short and miserable time with a good man. He wanted me to wear his habits. He wanted me to be just such a measure. He wanted me to be him. And I couldn't be that any more than I could be Anak and Tom Thumb, or Achilles and the Tortoise, all at once. I fell back in stubborn defiance on my native badness. He put my back up, and it stayed put.

* * * *

And shows cause.

It is well, I admit, to make a few good resolutions, such as not to commit murder without some small provocation. But even this is a matter of climate and law. In Texas, many a good man has shot his friend in spite of his firm resolve never to kill any but strangers. And even when a man might reasonably think himself safe in making a resolution, he is sometimes crowed over by fate. Cannibalism is a thing the average man may firmly resolve not to take to. But then, let him keep ashore and in towns where they sell provisions, for I knew a man of this kind who was lost in a shopless waste of mountain snow. He had a partner, and the partner died. The other didn't. I shall write this story at full length one day, when I get time and the requisite experience. The experience is my difficulty. But next year I am going to Central Africa. To conclude with a few disconnected moral remarks:

It is wicked for the naturally good to strive after badness.

It is worse for the naturally bad to try not to be dreadful examples.

The original cause of evil was forbidding anything at all.

If you let a bad man have his way he will feel good.
It is useless and expensive to reform others.
It is absurd to try and reform one's self.

As universal experience proves these sayings of mine, I won't attempt to prove them. I will conclude again with a short story. I knew a man who used to make a comfortable livelihood by killing travellers. He reformed and gave it up. He hadn't any adequate notion of a proper compromise, and he gave himself up too. They hanged him on his own confession to a tall cotton-wood tree. The moral is, that if we must reform, we shouldn't go too far, even on New Year's Eve.

* * * *

Angelina shakes her head over man.

Every woman thinks *she* can do it—until she tries. Every woman starts off with what she fondly believes to be a new and unfailing method, calculated to cleanse the Spotted One as effectually as—*Sapolio*. It is so easy. You put in the sinner at one end, and he drops out a saint at the other. It is so simple, too, *only to do as she tells him!* His regeneration is complete, theoretically, and she already hears the heavenly choir tuning up their harps to rejoice over him, when, suddenly, she awakes to the appalling discovery that *he does not want to be washed!* Ah! it's all very well to take horses to water, but you had better find out if they are thirsty first. We all know the sad history of *Tommy*, who persisted in saying "don't care," and who prematurely wound up his earthly career by a permanent residence inside a lion. Everybody had tried to reform *Tommy*, but only the lion succeeded. *Tommies* have been so plentiful from that day to this, that Tommy-eating lions feel unequal to the business now. The doctrine of the "Total Depravity of Man" is out of date now-a-days, but only consider the creature from the cradle to the grave. His walk through life is just a trot *downstairs*. Who holds his infant breath until he is black in the face to get his own way? *Tommy*. Who is it that dips his new boots in the sea, pinches his small sisters, and carries a pea-shooter to church instead of a prayer-book? *Tommy*. Alas! the schoolboy *Tommy* is no keener about spiritual ablutions than he is over physical tubbing. When grown to man's estate, *Tom* plays the part of the sower who goes forth to sow, and scatters broadcast a certain undesirable cereal which has the knack of always falling into *too* fruitful ground. There is a universal idea that all Toms have got to clear out stock, and that then there will be room to store the virtues. But when *Tom* matures into *Thomas*, does he renounce the Devil with all his

works? No, no. Mephistopheles is far too pleasant an acquaintance! He may renounce paying visits at his front door, but it is not necessary to lounge in the full light of Mephisto's public bar. There is a "jug and bottle entrance" for private consumers. New leaves! Ah! we know all about *them*, my dear man. You begin in pothooks; upset the ink-pot over the copy; *turn a leaf*—and then—*da capo!* No, you may resolve *Tommy*, *Tom* and *Thomas* into their ultimate constituents, and you will find that innate wickedness is the fundamental and primary cell upon which the whole organism is built. I don't try to iron the sea smooth, or wash the stripes off a tiger, nor do I talk about reforming man now. Poor man! The fruit of the tree of knowledge had diverse qualities, and he got the green half. The rosy half—the knowledge of *good*—was reserved by our first mother for herself and her daughters; but 'tis strange that they alone should crave for the whole apple.

* * * *

Gribble bethinketh him of a case.

Yes, I came across a case once, and it was not at all like the typical case one hears about from City Missionaries. We all know that story—the story of the man who, two years ago, used to get drunk and come home late every night and beat his wife, but now drinks nothing but cold tea and comes home so early that his wife beats him. Mine is quite a different sort of story. It is the story of a young man whom I will call Smith, who shared his chambers with another young man, who may be described as Jones. The weakness of Smith and Jones was Scotch whisky, and, without going into sordid details, I may say that they both drank quite enough of it to make it well worth their while to give it up. One New Year's Eve it happened that Smith went to church, and came out fully convinced of the propriety of making resolutions to reform. Being a modest man, he doubted his capacity to reform himself; but he was quite persuaded that it was his duty to make a reformatory effort of some sort. So he stepped into a nice quiet little private bar to think the matter over, and there decided to spend the New Year profitably in the reclamation of his friend Jones. That was a task, he thought, into which he would be able to throw his whole soul. It so happened, however, that Jones had also been to church that evening, and had returned with the inflexible determination of reforming Smith. The result was that, after an animated dialogue, which nearly led to violence, each of the reformers had to grant the other a plenary indulgence to drink whisky until bedtime. When they had had several glasses each,

Smith proposed a compromise. "I think, Jones," he said, "that if we really want to do some good in the world, our better plan will be to recognise that our own cases are hopeless, and make a combined effort to reform Robinson."

* * * *

Jones assented readily to the proposition, and, indeed, there was a good deal to be said for it. Robinson was, in the matter of whisky, only moderately bad, and was, therefore, a good subject for amateur reformers to try their hands upon. Robinson had just started for South Africa, and could, therefore, profit by his reformers' good advice without being contaminated by their bad example. So Smith and Jones sat down and wrote long letters to Robinson, urging him to mend his ways and give up the whisky bottle. They regarded the enterprise more or less as a practical joke, but their admonitions were just as serious as though they were desperately in earnest. They drew moving pictures of Robinson's sorrow-stricken mother, and of the sad old age he was preparing for himself. After keeping up their exhortations for about four months, they got tired of them and dropped them, consistently maintaining, meanwhile, their own immoderate potations. Three years afterwards Robinson returned from Africa, and Smith and Jones met him in the Strand. With the lapse of time their curious correspondence with him had quite escaped their memory. They went up to him and shook hands, and asked him to come into the Gaiety bar and have a drink. "No, thank you," replied Robinson, "I never drink nowadays. I haven't touched a drop of anything for years. Why, I thought——" He paused, and they remembered. They looked at him. His eyes were clear, his complexion was fresh, his walk firm and steady. Then they looked at each other. Jones noticed that Smith's nose was red; Smith noticed that Jones's eyes were blood-shot, and his cheeks puffy. That memorable New Year's Eve flashed back into both their recollections, and they turned round with one accord and fled up Catherine Street, frightened and abashed at the unlooked-for consequence of their own hypocritical exhortations. Whether Robinson afterwards succeeded in reclaiming the men by whom he himself had been reclaimed I do not know, but I should think it doubtful.

He telleth of its inglorious termination.

* * * *

Up to a certain time of life, there is some excuse for a man making New Year resolutions. He may have a reasonable belief that he can conquer a bad habit or a besetting sin. But after, say, thirty, he may just as well save himself the trouble.

Geo. R. Sims is pessimistic.

'Tis not enough to say
We're sorry, and repent,
And still go on from day to day
Just as we always went.

But, unless you are a weak-minded, vacillating sort of person, with no strength of character, you must go on. You can no more by resolution alter the shape of your habits than you can by resolution alter the shape of your nose. For nearly twenty years, every New Year's Day, I have resolved that I would give up smoking, that I would take more exercise, that I would go to bed early, that I would see the Tower of London, that I would not lose my temper, that I would face trouble instead of running away from it, that I would—but everybody knows those New Year's resolutions. They are common property. I haven't kept one of them. Nobody ever does.

* * * *

And sarcastic. It sounds very pretty in poetry to talk about the New Year Chimes ringing out the Old and ringing in the New, but that is just what New Year Chimes never have done, and never will do. Nothing new ever burst upon a wondering world because an arbitrary division of time has been reached in the calendar, and the old doesn't suddenly take its departure because annual subscriptions are once more due, and most of us date our letters and our cheques wrongly. And *we* don't leave off the old and begin the new because it is the 1st of January instead of the 31st of December. The spectacle of a sensible man listening for a clock to strike and then suddenly resolving to be something he hasn't been before is pitiable. The custom has only one advantage. It enables a man who is not satisfied with himself on the 2nd of January to postpone his good resolutions for a twelvemonth all but a day, and that, to many of us, is an exceedingly convenient arrangement.

* * * *

He lets things slide. I have given up making any resolutions at all. The last time I looked out of my front door as the Old Year was at its last gasp, it was a frosty night, and the stars were shining gloriously in a steel blue sky. There was a fair amount of traffic still about, the cab horses were sliding on the roadway, small boys were sliding on the pavement, and boys of a larger growth, respectable elderly gentlemen, were unwillingly imitating them. The spectacle inspired me with one of my happiest New Year's resolutions. "For the future," I said to myself, "I won't worry about anything.

I will let things slide." That resolution I have honestly endeavoured to carry out. Things that used to trouble me once trouble me no longer. I let them slide. If I see a scathing criticism on a book or a play which I have written, I don't walk about or tear my hair and thirst for the writer's blood. I read the criticism, shrug my shoulders, and let it slide. If a good-natured friend comes to me and tells me that so-and-so has been saying wicked things about me, I don't write a furious letter to so-and-so and ask him what he means by such behaviour. I let it slide. The other day, the builder who was repairing my leads informed me that the roof of my house was in a very unsafe condition, that I ought to have it entirely re-slated. I thanked him for informing me of the matter, but I let it slide. There, I confess that in sticking to my New Year's resolution, I made a mistake. My roof slid so far that some of it fell over into the street, and people in various walks of life came to me with portions of slate embedded in their skulls, and demanded compensation. A roof is the one thing which, if you hold a repairing lease, it is never advisable to "let slide." As to New Year's resolutions—well, everybody lets them slide.

* * * *

"Do men reform?" That depends. It is like asking, "*Do people given over by the doctor get well?*" Some could a tale unfold of sick folk condemned by the faculty who have nevertheless survived. We have all heard of the patient who was told by the great Dr. Abernethy that he could not live a month, and although he got quite well, and frequently met Abernethy in the streets of Edinburgh, the famous man would never take the least notice of him afterwards. I am sorry to say that this is rather the way we are inclined to treat reformed characters. We first deny the reform, and then refuse to have anything to say to the converted sinner. "When," says Dr. De Witt Talmage, "the Prodigal comes back, how do we treat him? Do we welcome him? Not at all. What do we do? We slam the door in his face. 'Oh, give him a shakedown in the barn! Don't kill the fatted calf —veal's too good for him!'" Yet, in spite of every attempt to keep repentant wanderers from re-entering the close preserve of Respectability, men *do* reform, and as a rule they reform precisely in proportion to the removal of temptation—and usually under the pressure of counter-attractions. Now, I have no doubt whatever that people come into the world with a pronounced thirst for drink, for parsimony, extravagance, lust, cruelty. These

The Rev. R. Haweis believes men do reform.

natures are over-weighted, and in the friction of life the moral balance is soon lost. When the temptation is not to mere excess, as in drink, but depends, as in cruelty, upon a morbid perversion of emotional appetite, the moral delinquency verges on the *insane neurosis*, and is much more difficult to deal with; but in nine cases out of ten, when we go wrong, we are the victims of average temperament, but of abnormal environment. Men will always have a tendency to travel along the line of the least resistance. The secret of keeping right or of getting right consists in so manipulating the inner life, and so arranging its outward environments, as to make the line of least resistance coincide with the line of right. The man who faces danger boldly does so because shame or enthusiasm in him are stronger than fear, and so determine the direction of his action. The criminal who leaves off stealing does so because a new view of existence has been presented to him, or better methods of obtaining his desires; or perhaps other new desires have been excited in him which drive him perforce into peace, content, and respectability. The question whether men ever reform is certainly one that has been answered in the affirmative over and over again. The question of real importance is, rather, "*Why do they reform?*"

* * * *

He gives instances.

St. Augustine was a dissolute young fellow, but he came under religious convictions, which, by exciting in him the fear of hell and the love of God, gave him a distaste for worldly pleasures, and so he "reformed." He was won by spiritual counter-attractions. Tennyson tells us that many a father whose youth was "full of foolish noise" may be seen wearing his "manhood hale and green," a sober man amongst his boys. The spectacle is not an uncommon one. The change comes from the quieting down of the effervescing hot passions of youth—it is primarily a change from within. Along with it has also come the perception that a certain repose and routine in affection as well as in business is more conducive to rational development and normal happiness than the spasmodic bursts of passion, and the ill-regulated sallies of adventure or intrigue. General Booth has given us another illustration of the power of an inner impulse kindled and sustained by suitable environments. Many a man now said to be "soundly saved" may be found in the Salvation Army workshops. He may have been steady for two, three, or more years. The lines of vice are still furrowed deep into his face, but the moral mal-odour of vice, along with the smell of drink, has evaporated. A new environ-

ment has saved him. It is said that Nelson was often appointed to mutinous ships because he had the faculty of surrounding the men with a discipline which drove them into regular habits, whilst by his personal influence he stirred their enthusiasm and contrived to radiate content. Dr. Barnardo is fond of publishing the portraits of his boys when they first arrive at his home, and again after they have been there a year. The transformation is often remarkable, and a very good illustration of the efficacy of favourable conditions in reform.

* * * *

Can the drunkard reform?

Whether drunkards of a particular sort are ever really cured, is one of those questions with which medical science and philanthropy still seem to be struggling. That total abstinence in a vast number of cases is quite possible and perfectly effective—both in the case of drunkards and gamblers—there is proof positive. It is equally true that years of abstinence and apparent reform have been followed by final relapse. But even a year of sobriety and usefulness may be claimed by reformers as solid gain, just as much as a year of good health. Only unless a man *dies* sober, moralists are not satisfied—although the doctor never expects a man to die in good health! There must be something defective in our method of casting up moral accounts. At one time we are told that our actions are to be weighed in the balance, and if the good ones don't out-weigh the evil ones, we are to be condemned—unless, indeed, we have made a clean sweep of all the evil deeds by one repentance at the last moment. At another time we are assured that all our best actions will go for nothing if we happen to die drunk or unforgiving, or with a lie on our lips—though the lie may be to save others. It is not easy to see why reformation for twenty years, and the moral relapse of a month or a moment at the end, should be thus severely dealt with; but this is a question only related to, not identical with, the one before me, which is—"Do men ever reform?"

* * * *

He believes there is less vice than virtue in human nature.

Lastly, I suppose that what really underlies the reader's mind whilst he follows these remarks is, "Ay, but let us have a clear word about domestic cases. Do married men who have ceased to be what is called '*regular*' in their lives ever reform?" Experience shows that many a young fellow is steadied by marriage—his impulse and affection are fixed and satisfied by the woman he loves, and so habits are formed which place him practically beyond

the reach of temptation—the woman retaining her beneficent and sexually exclusive influence over him long after the days of youth, and even until the end. But if a man, after marriage, has ceased to be *regular*, experience, I think, shows that the marital spell once broken is not likely to be again so entirely potent as to recall or reform the wanderer. The reason is probably this—reform is usually due to *change of environment*, or fresh impulse, and in the routine of domestic life there is no such change, no such new impulse. No devotion on the part of the wife will have any effect on the husband, any more than any devotion on the part of the husband will affect for more than a moment a wife seriously *épris* with someone else. The remedy which it is sought to apply does not touch the disease. The essential conditions of the two lives may be beyond re-adaptation and call for alteration. Under the fixed conditions reform will, humanly speaking, not take place. But should the irreclaimable husband find himself in a position to marry the woman he loves, he will show no further signs of irregularity. The same is true of women. Times out of number, left to themselves or unequally yoked, they will be lax and irregular. Once settle the true affinity, and what we call reform is accomplished. Of course, I am taking life as I find it. I am not *approving* of the facts which I observe—I am *stating* them. The question I am asked is not "Ought men to reform," but "*Do they ?*" And I have sketched a few of the conditions under which reform seems to take place, and without which it is hardly to be looked for. The incalculable and abnormal influences of religion I have left out of account as more suitable for the pulpit than for the secular press; but let no one for a moment think that I am blind to the miracles of grace any more than I ignore miracles of healing. Thank God, such things *do* take place, and most of us have caught glimpses of the "hands which reach through darkness, moulding men." But when all is said and done, I can't help feeling natural causes are not enough regarded. There is, I verily believe, much less inherent vice than virtue in human nature. Jesus Christ certainly thought so, though I am not so sure about Paul. Just as the body has a tendency to get out of order, it has also a still more powerful tendency under fair conditions to get right. So the soul, or man's moral nature, instinctively turns to the light, and what we as wise physicians have to do chiefly in each case is to remove obstructions and assist nature to recuperate, both in body and in soul. Practically, men reform (if they do) when virtue is made possible and life endurable by favourable conditions, well-directed energies, worthy aims, and legitimate gratifications.

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